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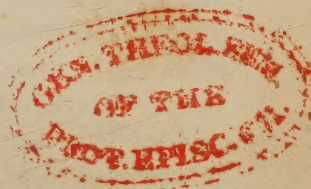
JOHN EMORY,

BISHOP OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

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THE
EPISCOPAL CONTROVERSY

REVIEWED.



BY JOHN EMORY, D.D.

LATE ONE OF THE BISHOPS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

EDITED BY HIS SON,

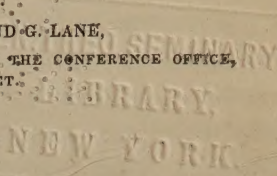
FROM AN UNFINISHED MANUSCRIPT.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY T. MASON AND G. LANE,
FOR THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH; AT THE CONFERENCE OFFICE,
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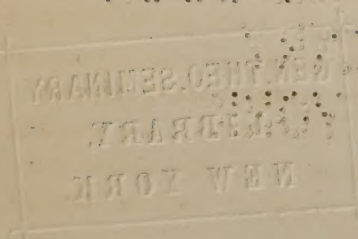
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PREFACE TO EPISCOPAL CONTROVERSY,

BY THE EDITOR

THE late period at which this work is presented to the public, and the unfinished state in which it appears, will be best explained by a brief statement of the circumstances attending its composition and publication. About ten or twelve years since, when the economy of the Methodist Episcopal Church was assailed by foes from within, the author of the present essay undertook its defence in a tract entitled "A Defence of our Fathers, and of the original Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church," &c. That work passed through several editions, and as the demand seemed likely to continue, the publishers requested the author to prepare a revised edition. This he appears, at one time, to have contemplated, as a copy was found interleaved, apparently for that purpose. Subsequently, however, he seems to have been satisfied, from his own observation and the opinion of others, that, inasmuch as the controversy which had elicited the original work was dying away, while the attacks upon the organization of the church, both openly and secretly, were perhaps increasing in other quarters, it would be better to prepare an entirely new work, in which the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church should be defended, not merely against the cavils of a particular party or sect, but against all opposition; and its entire accordance with Scriptural authority and primitive usage be established by a full investigation of the subject of episcopacy in general, and of Methodist episcopacy in particular. Such was the plan of the present work: the sudden death of the author left it but partially and imperfectly executed. The manuscript contained only a discus-

sion of the subject of episcopacy in general, in a reply to "An Essay on the Invalidity of Presbyterian Ordination, by John Esten Cooke, M. D.," and a part of a reply to a tract entitled "Episcopacy tested by Scripture," by Dr. H. U. Onderdonk, then assistant bishop of Pennsylvania. Whether it was intended to notice any other works on the opposite side, may be doubted, as the first afforded an opportunity to examine the argument from the Fathers, the second the argument from Scripture. Why an answer to these two works, one of which was published in 1829, and the other in 1830, was delayed until 1835, the year of the author's death, none will inquire who have any knowledge of his arduous and incessant engagements, first, in establishing the Methodist Book Concern on the basis on which it has since stood, and subsequently, in discharging the still more responsible and absorbing duties of the episcopate; especially when it is farther considered that it would take some time to satisfy him, that arguments, which appeared to him so untenable, could ever have possessed the influence which they seem to have exerted on some minds.

This may suffice in regard to the circumstances under which the essay was written. It may be expected that some explanation will also be given of the delay of its publication. To some, however, and certainly to the editor himself, a more interesting inquiry may be, why, since it is acknowledged to be imperfect, it is published at all. Immediately after the author's decease the manuscript was examined, and being found incomplete was laid aside, not to meet the rude gaze of those who can pardon no imperfection however unavoidable, but as a memorial of the last efforts of one, every relic of whom was precious. Some time after, however, several intimate friends of the deceased, of high standing in the church, desired to read the manuscript, and after pe-

rusing it strongly urged its publication, as being sufficiently complete to subserve the interests of the church. If, therefore, the reputation of his father, or the cause of the church, should suffer by the publication of an unfinished essay, the editor's apology must be, that his own inclination has yielded to the requests of those who, both by their official station and superior judgment, had a claim upon his deference.

The principal object of the editor in discharging the duty thus imposed upon him, has been to follow the original, without any additions or alterations other than those which were necessary, and which are marked as such. This scrupulous accuracy has occasionally led to repetition, which by no means characterized the author's usual style. The careful reader, however, will observe that this occurs principally in the quotations; and will find a sufficient explanation in the fact, that these quotations were not written out in the manuscript, but only referred to, so that the repetitions would not appear until the work was prepared for the press.

As to the subject matter itself of the essay, it will, perhaps, become the editor to say but little. There are two thoughts, however, which he would desire the reader to bear in mind while reading this or any similar tract. The first is, that no argument is of any avail in the controversy with the Methodist Episcopal Church, unless it prove not merely that episcopacy is a proper form of church government, (for this she herself asserts, and adopts it as her own,) but also, that no other form of government is admissible; nay, more, no other form of episcopacy than that which is founded upon a distinct order of bishops, deriving their authority through an uninterrupted succession from the apostles.

The second thought is, that the manner in which efforts are now made to establish the high-church claims on the foundation of Scripture, is calculated to lead to

great evil. Not that we object to the attempt to test the question by Scripture, (for undoubtedly this is the only criterion that should be admitted by Protestant Christians, and we only regret that high-churchmen have not submitted to it before,) but to the mode of carrying it out, by making incidental hints and obscure intimations the basis of what are alleged to be important doctrines. This course, (which has been adopted in regard to many other dogmas, and with a zeal proportioned to the deficiency of evidence for them,) whatever success it may promise at first, cannot fail to be ultimately pernicious to religion in general, and of course to the particular party which pursues it. And it might be well for ultraists of every denomination to consider what would be gained by securing the sanction of Scripture, if, in the very attempt, we impair the authority of Scripture itself; like shipwrecked mariners, who, by their imprudent eagerness sink the long boat on which they fondly relied for escape. In conclusion, the editor regrets the necessity of taking any part in those controversies by which the Christian church is distracted and her strength divided, at a time when all her forces ought to be combined against the armies of the alien. But it must be remembered that in this dispute the Methodist Episcopal Church stands on the defensive. She interferes not with the claims of other denominations to be regarded as members of the spiritual body of Christ, but she dare not surrender her own. She, with others, now stands where the early gentile Christians stood in opposing the Jewish bigotry of the temple, and where the ancestors of the present Protestant high-churchmen stood in resisting the usurpations of papal Rome; nor will she abandon this post of honour until exclusionists of every class have surrendered their peculiar claims to the covenant mercies of God.

Dickinson College, May 25, 1838.

R. E.

EPISCOPACY.

THE field over which the episcopal controversy has been spread is one so wide, and marked by the tracks of those who have traversed it in so many various and even cross directions, that he who would thread its mazes without danger of missing the narrow path of truth will require, to use a phrase of Dr. Jortin's, more than Ariadne's clew. This consideration of itself, not to mention others which might be named, would deter me from my present undertaking, (which I most sincerely wish were in the hands of those who have both more leisure and ability for the task,) were it not that the continued, or, more properly, the recently renewed attacks, both public and private, of those who set up a claim of divine right to monopolize all ecclesiastical authority, and even the covenant mercies of our Saviour himself, oblige us to expose the futility and the arrogance of their pretensions, and to vindicate the grounds on which, having received help from God, we continue to claim a place, be it even the humblest, among the lawful churches of Christ. In the prosecution of this design, earnestly imploring, both for myself and the reader, the guidance of a safer clew than Ariadne's—that wisdom from above which is promised to all that lack and ask—I purpose to divide the following tract into two parts.

In the first, I shall consider the subject of episcopacy generally; and in the second, that of the Methodist Episcopal Church in particular.*

* [The reader will perceive that this second part of the author's design was never accomplished, and the first has been left incomplete. The author's views, however, of Methodist episcopacy may be in some degree gathered from his "Defence of our Fathers."—ED.]

OF EPISCOPACY IN GENERAL.

Claiming, as the Methodist Episcopal Church does, to be not only a lawful church of Christ, but a lawful *episcopal* church, it is plain that our controversy is not with episcopacy itself, as a form of church polity. Our opponents, indeed, evince a great inclination to the begging of this question, and too many among ourselves inconsistently, though inadvertently, strengthen them in the sophism, by conceding to them, both in conversation and in writing, the exclusive title of Episcopalians. This ought to be corrected, and the various churches of Christendom distinguished by their proper titles. At least each should not be forgetful of *its own* proper designation, nor yield the undue influence of even the exclusive name to those who would and do make unmerited advantage of it: for, as has been well remarked, though names are but sounds, yet those who are conversant in the history of mankind will readily allow that they have greater influence on the opinions of the generality of men than most people are aware of.* The episcopal form of church polity is ours also. We admit and adopt episcopacy. We admit its agreeableness to the constitution of the Christian church in the apostolical age. But still the question remains, *What is episcopacy?* Not what is it that Papists and other high-church exclusionists are

* [The reader will be pleased to see, in this connection, the opinion of Coleridge on this subject, as expressed in note 56 of the "Aids to Reflection," where he is objecting to the ordinary application of the words *Unitarian* and *Catholic* :—

"Convinced, as I am, that current appellations are never wholly indifferent or inert; and that, when employed to express the characteristic belief or object of a *religious* confederacy, they exert on the many a great and constant, though insensible, influence,—I cannot but fear that in adopting the former ['the name which the party itself has taken up'] I may be sacrificing the interests of truth beyond what the duties of courtesy can demand or justify."—Ed.]

pleased to denominate thus at this day,—but what is episcopacy in the New Testament sense of the *term* or of the *thing*? To the pure and sufficient light of the Holy Scriptures on this subject, our high-church opponents generally seem to think it necessary to add that also of the writings of the Christian fathers, as they are styled. Without resorting to this source, indeed, it is absolutely impossible for them—even those few of them who profess to confine the argument to the ground of Scripture—to complete their chain. Without this an essential link is wanting, as I shall hereafter take occasion to show in regard to a modern writer of this class. But, although we deny that there is any necessity for this resort, in any inquiry regarding any point of essential Christian doctrine, morals, ordinances, or church polity,—believing as we do, and as all *Protestants* ought to do, in the perfection and entire sufficiency of Scripture alone on every such question,—yet I shall not object to follow some of them even into this branch of the inquiry,—satisfied as I am that *their* cause can gain no just support from this collateral branch of evidence,—so long as it shall be confined to the Christian writings of the age immediately succeeding that of the apostles, and of which neither the genuineness nor the integrity can be fairly questioned. By the aid of these lights, my object is to review the grounds which have been taken in regard to the *essential* constitution of a lawful *episcopal* church of Christ. And if, where so much may be said, and has been said, by learned, wise, and good men, on opposite sides, there be a strong presumption of probability, as in most similar cases, that truth lies in the middle and not in either extreme, I trust to be able to show that it is precisely this ground—a ground both liberal and safe—that is occupied by the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The writers on the high-church side, in general, make up their issue between diocesan episcopacy, in their

sense of it, as an intrinsically and essentially distinct and superior third order by divine appointment, without which there can be no true Christian church nor valid Christian ministry or ordinances, and parity—that is to say, the presbyterian doctrine, strictly, of but one order of Christian ministers. Let it be distinctly understood, however, that this is not the issue between them and *us*. We do indeed admit the validity of presbyterian ordination; but not the presbyterian doctrine of parity. We cannot feel at liberty to go so far toward this as even the present assistant bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Dr. *H. U. Onderdonk*.^{*} We dare not say with him, “If we cannot authenticate the claims of the episcopal office, we will surrender those of our deacons, and let all power be confined to the one office of presbyters.”[†] By no means. The Scriptural evidence for the order of deacons, as an order of ministers distinct from that of presbyters or bishops, is too plain to be thus lightly treated. The directions of St. Paul to Timothy, (1 Tim. iii, 8–13,) not to mention other passages, are too explicit and solemn to allow *us* to surrender this order *in any event*. Let it stand on its own ground, whether we can authenticate that of bishops or not; “for they that have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree,” to which their title ought not to be made dependent on the claims of others to any other degree.

I ought, indeed, to do the last-quoted author the justice to say, and I do it with pleasure, that he subscribes not to the extreme opinion that episcopacy is essential to the being of a church.[‡] I wish that what he says in some other parts of the tract cited could fairly be reconciled with this candid and commendable concession, which

^{*} [The reader will recollect that this was written before the death of the then bishop of Pennsylvania, Dr. White.—ED.]

[†] Episcopacy Tested by Scripture, p. 11.

[‡] Ibid., p. 5.

his sense of truth, after all his investigations, compelled him to make. In one respect he seems to go far beyond even the venerable senior bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, whose assistant he is. Dr. White,* with that leading champion of high church, Hooker, distinctly admitted the plea of "the exigence of necessity," for departing from the fancied apostolical succession in the high-church sense; and I have not understood that this admission has ever been retracted, although the pamphlet containing it, which was originally published in 1783, was republished in the city of his own residence, under the auspices of some of his own episcopal charge, within a few years past, and although the authority of his opinion, as an *argumentum ad hominem*, has been repeatedly referred to in this controversy. His assistant, Dr. O., on the contrary, seems to think that his (Dr. O.'s) essay settles the point that episcopacy, in his sense of it, is a "divine appointment," and then affirms that, from such an appointment, "no plea can be strong enough to release us."† The word "no" he himself makes emphatic, as is here done. Indeed, on this ground, and in the same note, p. 40, he seems to suppose—where the sacraments cannot be obtained through such an apostolic ministry, that is to say, through the high-church succession contended for—it would be better to dispense with them altogether, as being "not absolutely, but only generally, necessary to salvation." Does this writer then really think that there is just as plain *Scriptural* evidence, (for to this single ground of argument he sets out with professing strictly to confine his essay,) of an unbroken series of high-church bishops from the apostles down to himself, by divine appointment,—not excepting Alex. VI., of Rome, and other similar links of the chain,—and that conformity to this pattern is of universal and perpetual obliga-

* Case of the Episcopal Churches in the United States Considered.

† Episcopacy Tested by Scripture, p. 40.

tion, as that the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper are of divine institution and thus binding? It may be answered, perhaps, that the very supposition of "Scriptural" evidence of such a thing involves an utter and palpable absurdity. I grant it. But who is it that gives occasion for the absurdity? Does not the writer alluded to place the obligation of conforming to a ministry claiming exclusive title through that alleged succession, on a ground not merely equal, but even superior to that which binds us to the observance of the sacraments themselves? And yet he himself concedes, in the commencement of his essay, that no argument is worth taking into the account that has not a palpable bearing on the *Scriptural evidence* of episcopacy;—nay, that episcopacy itself (and certainly then the prelatical succession) is not essential to the being of a church. The high-church succession against the sacraments! And Dr. Onderdonk, a Protestant, thinks, if we cannot have both, that we ought rather to give up the latter! Is that succession then "absolutely" necessary to salvation or only "generally" so, on his own principles? Is the evidence that diocesan bishops, in the high-church sense, should uninterruptedly succeed to the office and powers of the apostles, and the observance of this order in the churches be imperatively binding, by divine appointment, through all time, as plain *from Scripture*, (the only ground of argument on the question "worth taking into account,") as that the sacraments are of divine institution and thus imperatively binding?* I am not arguing with Quakers, but with Protestant Episcopalians. What answer do *they* give? Until it can be answered in the affirmative, an essential link in Dr. O.'s wire-drawn chain is clearly wanting. Could it even be supplied, which it never can, still the claims of the pre-

* [This sentence is stricken out in the original, but as its place has not been supplied, and as something of the kind is necessary to the construction of the succeeding sentences, it is here restored.—ED.]

latical succession and of the sacraments would only stand on *equal* ground. As it is, we admire that any *Protestant*, at least, can for a moment hesitate between them.*

How much more "apostolical" and rational are the sentiments of Dr. White, now the senior bishop in the same church and in the same diocese. Indeed, as he assumes, "even those who hold episcopacy to be of divine right conceive the obligation to it to be not binding when that idea would be destructive of public worship." "Much more," he justly continues, "must *they* think so who indeed venerate and prefer that form as the most ancient and eligible, but without any idea of divine right in the case. This," he adds, "the author [Dr. White] believes to be the sentiment of the great body of Episcopalians in America, in which respect they have in their favour,

* That the reader may have an opportunity to judge whether I have in any manner misunderstood Dr. O. on this important point, I subjoin the whole passage, remarking only, in addition, that by "the apostolical or Scriptural ministry," I of course understood him to mean that of the uninterrupted high church succession for which he contends, and which *he* allows "to be *divine*." His language is,—

"It is due to our discussion to add a few remarks on the question whether *necessity* will justify a departure from the apostolical or Scriptural ministry, or the instituting of a new ministry where that cannot be obtained? On this subject the first point to be determined is, what is '*necessity*'? '*Absolute necessity*,' to assume the functions of the ministry, never can exist; salvation is not indissolubly connected with the offices of a pastor; the sacraments are not absolutely, but only '*generally necessary to salvation*,'—those who cannot obtain them not being required to partake of them. Difficulties long insuperable, preventing the attainment of an important object, form the next species of '*necessity*,' and that which is usually referred to in this argument. And here several questions arise. Are the difficulties *insuperable*? Have they been *long* insuperable? Is the object so *important* as to justify deviation from an institution allowed to be *divine*? There should be no reasonable doubt on either of these points.

"In our opinion the last of the above questions can never be justly answered in the affirmative; *no* plea can be strong enough to release us from *divine* appointments. What God has instituted for his church he will preserve in his church, and diffuse through it, till the institution be abrogated by him or is about to be so. This appears to us so clear a dictate of faith, so fundamental a religious truth, that we will not argue for it; it is an axiom, or, at least, an undeniable postulate; and it ought to settle the whole matter." Page 40, note E. [The words in italics are printed as in the original.—Ed.]

unquestionably, the sense of the Church of England, and, as he believes, the opinions of her most distinguished prelates for piety, virtue, and abilities.”* Again:—To make any particular form of church government, though adopted by the apostles, unalterably binding, Dr. White maintains, “it must be shown enjoined in positive precept.”† He remarks farther that Dr. Calamy having considered it as the sense of the church [of England], “in the preface to the ordinal, that the three orders were of divine appointment, and urged it as a reason for nonconformity,—the bishop, [Hoadly,] *with evident propriety*, remarks that the service pronounces *no such thing*; and that, therefore, Dr. Calamy created a difficulty where the church had made none—there being ‘some difference,’ says he, ‘between these two sentences:—Bishops, priests, and deacons are three distinct orders in the church *by divine appointment*,—and, *From the apostles’ time* there have been, in Christ’s church, bishops, priests, and deacons.” “The same distinction,” says Dr. White, “is *actually drawn and fully proved* by Stillingfleet in the *Irenicum*.”

“Now,” continues Dr. White, “if the form of church government rest on no other foundation than ancient and apostolical *practice*, it is humbly submitted to consideration whether Episcopalians will not be thought *scarcely deserving the name of Christians* should they, rather than consent to a temporary deviation, abandon every ordinance of positive and divine appointment.”‡

Now I suppose that Dr. W. and the “distinguished prelate” to whom he refers, to go no farther, had probably examined both the Scriptures and the fathers with as much care and capacity as Dr. O., or even as *Dr. Cooke*,—a medical gentleman devoted to a different profession,—who, “after six weeks’ close inquiry,” as he informs us, jumps to such “a thorough conviction” as

* Case of the Episcopal Church in the United States Considered, p. 25.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid., p. 22 and note.

leads him to undertake to enlighten the world with a book of such episcopal ultraism as would not discredit Rome itself,—such a one as not even the ablest prelates of the Church of England, in the judgment of Dr. White, himself concurring, with all the predisposing and surrounding circumstances to bias them to that side, and after more than *six years* of “close inquiry,” would have had the temerity to usher into the world. True learning, sanctified by piety, is always modest. And if there be any question debated among Christians on which their moderation ought to appear to all men, this is one;—a question, not concerning the vital and fundamental doctrines of our holy religion, nor even the essential being of a Christian church,—but merely concerning its form of polity, as different branches of the church, in different times and in different places and circumstances, may conceive the same to be most consonant to the principles and objects of Christianity, and best calculated to promote vital and practical godliness in the earth.

But I beg pardon. This is not Dr. C.’s ground. His system admits of no such moderation. Although a very recent convert to it, at the time of undertaking his book, he goes far beyond Dr. Onderdonk, Dr. White, and the most distinguished, pious, virtuous, and able prelates of the mother Church of England itself. With him it is a question of life or death, neck or nothing, church or no church. Indeed, the language which, over and over, he quotes with approbation, as “most unexceptionable,” seems, to my poor apprehension, to be little, if any, short of absolute blasphemy. It is almost too revolting to be repeated. Of this I shall afford the reader an opportunity to judge in the sequel; remarking here, by the way, that this gentleman might as hopefully undertake to persuade this generation to adopt the sentiments of the famous “Apostolical Constitutions,” which, as the learned Archdeacon Jortin remarks, “repeat it over

and over, lest Christians should chance to forget it—that a bishop is a god, a god upon earth, and a king, and infinitely superior to a king, and ruling over rulers and kings.” “Here is strange language indeed! even far beyond all *eminencies* and *holinesses*.”* In the judgment of an eminent critic,† the sentiments contained in the “Apostolical Constitutions” bear a very near resemblance to those in the epistles attributed to Ignatius and cited by Dr. Cooke. According to these, indeed, the reverence due to CHRIST himself is less than that which is due to the *bishop*. That which we owe to Christ is made the measure of the reverence due to “the deacons,”—the lowest order; while “the *bishop*” is to be revered “as the Father,”—evidently meaning God “the Father,”—in whose place he is alleged to preside in the church. Could any language more clearly betray the hand of the forger of some later age? Will any friend of the holy and humble Ignatius—the disciple of John, whose epistles are the very model of simplicity,—will any such believe that that plain and pious man, on the very eve of martyrdom, and *himself a bishop*, would have used such language, and urged and illustrated it again and again, that we might be sure not to mistake or forget it? It is incredible; or, if credible, it stamps the name of Ignatius with a stigma from which we would fain rescue it. Before Dr. C.’s pattern of episcopacy can be embraced, (for what he quotes as “most unexceptionable,” will be taken as his own,) we must believe that St. Paul made a great mistake when he drew the picture of the man of sin sitting in the temple of God as God; for this, we have now to learn, is the very character of a true Christian bishop, though not such a one as Paul describes to Timothy, nor as his son Timothy himself. Why, then, should we any longer be offended with the style of “our lord god, the pope”? Is

* Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, vol. i, pp. 154, 155.

† Dr. Campbell.

at any worse than (*horresco referens*) our lord god, the *bishop*?*

Consistently enough with the above, the Ignatius of Dr. C. is guilty of the profanity of staking his own soul as "*security for them that submit to their bishop, with their presbyters and deacons;*" (the latter classes of whom, however, be it remembered, being themselves bound to obey their bishop as "the source of all authority;")† averring that "*whatsoever he [the bishop] shall approve of, that is also pleasing unto God;*" and accordingly, in another place, "*that we ought to look upon the bishop even as we would do upon the Lord himself.*" Epistles to Polycarp, the Smyrneans, and the Ephesians. Appendix, pp. 6, 22, 24.

Fine times, truly, for bishops, if these doctrines can be made to prevail; (and a new and certain way to heaven, which neither our Lord nor any of the apostles ever discovered,—*implicit obedience to the bishop;*) especially, if we add one other very remarkable dictum of this Ignatius, as adduced by Dr. C., viz.:—"The more any one sees his bishop *silent*, the more let him revere him." Ibid., p. 6. That is, it would seem, the

* It may be proper to mention, for the information of general readers, that there are two sets of epistles in the name of Ignatius: one denominated the *larger*, and the other the *shorter* or *smaller*. The larger are given up by critics as confessedly interpolated; which demonstrates that some forger did make free with the name of Ignatius. The smaller, Dr. C. pronounces "most unexceptionable, and—written in the very spirit of an ardently pious Christian," p. 67. Yet, only two pages before, he had quoted Dr. Lardner with applause as saying that, after a careful comparison of the two, he was of opinion that "even the smaller epistles may have been tampered with by the Arians, or the orthodox, or both," p. 65.

He then asserts that the interpolations in these epistles respected the Arian controversy, which had nothing to do with the subject of church government; and immediately afterward adds, "It is evident, therefore, that there is not the slightest ground to suspect the interpolation of passages to favour episcopacy." I do not at all perceive the force of this logic, and shall hereafter take occasion more fully to expose its futility. But the eulogy of Dr. C. warrants at least the inference that he considers whatever these epistles contain on the subject of episcopacy as "most unexceptionable." This is sufficient for my present purpose.

† Dr. Cooke, p. 19.

more he resembles the “dumb dogs” denounced by Isaiah, and, consequently, the less he resembles the prophets who were commanded to “cry aloud” and “spare not,” lifting up their “voice like a trumpet;” or Bishop Timothy, whom Paul charged to “preach the word,—instant in season and out of season;” “reproving, rebuking, exhorting;” or Paul himself, who “taught publicly and from house to house,—testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks—warning every one, night and day, with tears;”—the less, I say, a bishop, according to Dr. C.’s favourite Ignatius, resembles these, the more he ought to be revered. On this singular sentiment, Dr. Campbell well remarks:—Consequently, if, like the Nazianzene monk celebrated by Gregory, a bishop should, in praise of God, devote his tongue to an inviolable taciturnity, he would be completely venerable. This, as the same able author adds, one would be tempted to think, originated from some opulent ecclesiastic, who was by far too great a man for preaching; at least, it seems an oblique apology for those who have no objection to any thing implied in a bishopric except the function.*

Now, to perfect the claims of such lords over God’s heritage, with their subject presbyters and deacons, nothing more would seem to be wanting but to persuade the Christian world that “WITHOUT THESE THERE IS NO CHURCH.” And these are the identical words which Dr. C. triumphantly alleges from Ignatius, and puts in capitals as throwing “a blaze of light on the subject.”† They do, indeed,—a burning blaze—quite enough to consume the argument. They assert more than Dr. Onderdonk believed—with Dr. C.’s book before him—

* Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, p. 102. Nearly akin to this was the injunction to the English bishops in the reign of Edward VI. They were enjoined to preach *four times a year*, unless they had a reasonable excuse. Neal’s History of the Puritans, vol. i, p. 91.

† Ibid., p. 20. See also p. 19.

or Dr. White, the senior bishop of the same church, or the great body of the most distinguished bishops, or others, among *Protestant* Episcopalians, in Europe or America.* Yet to such a sweeping conclusion Dr. C. suddenly leaps over the heads of all these, assuring us, at the same time, that *he* had always been in the habit of requiring strong evidence upon any subject, and never yielding assent to any thing that was not supported by it. This, then, I suppose, may be regarded as a specimen of his incredulity without strong evidence; although eminent and candid critics have been compelled to admit that much of what has been imposed upon the world in the name of the meek and holy Ignatius is demonstrably spurious, and that, in consequence, so great a degree of uncertainty has been thrown even upon the rest as to render it extremely difficult even for those most deeply versed in ecclesiastical antiquities and literary criticism, after many years of close investigation, to distinguish what is genuine and true from what is interpolated and false. Let it be distinctly understood that what is above said, or may hereafter be said, for I shall resume this point in another place, is by no means intended to detract in the least from the just merits of that aged and venerable martyr, whose name and memory are entitled to the highest respect; but, for this very reason, to save him, if possible, as Dr. Campbell observes, “from a second martyrdom in his works, through the attempts not of open enemies, but of deceitful [I would rather say, of credulous, or injudicious] friends.”†

Unlimited and implicit subjection then, as has been shown, on the part of the whole people, not only to the bishop, but to the whole clerical order, is the doctrine of Ignatius as quoted and underwritten by Dr. C.,—

* [At this part of the manuscript there are memoranda indicating that the author intended to say more upon the subject.—ED.]

† Lectures, p. 103.

urged too, as it is, by the supreme motive of thereby infallibly securing their salvation, on the pledge of his own soul for it.

In the progress of that species of absolute episcopal lordship, *by divine right*, for which Dr. C. pleads, he undertakes to show, p. 99, that terms, corresponding with the model of those alleged from Ignatius, were used in Tertullian's time also, conveying the very idea that a bishop ruled as "a king" and "master." At p. 47, he quotes from Hilary too, with apparent approbation, after Dr. Bowden, that "the bishop is the *vicegerent of Christ*, and represents his *person*."* The legitimate and natural fruit of such doctrines began to exhibit itself, and laid the true foundation of the papacy, so early as in the days of Jerome, in the fourth century. This may be seen in a passage quoted from Jerome by Dr. C. himself, though for a very different purpose. Of some of the bishops even of that time, Jerome testifies that, "as if placed upon some lofty eminence, they scarce deign to see mortals and to speak to their fellow-servants," p. 113. Lofty, indeed! And if the sentiments cited by Dr. C. as "most unexceptionable," can be triumphantly established, and on the basis of *divine right*, similar fruit, in process of time, (such is poor human nature,) must and will again appear. And how far civil liberty itself could long be safe under such a system of absolute spiritual despotism, bound upon the neck of the prostrate people by the supreme sanction of divine appointment, the history of the past must instruct us, or we must remain uninstructed, or learn from sad experiment.

I am truly glad, however, for the sake of our common Christianity, and especially for the sake of the

* One of these vicegerents and representatives of Christ, in the lineal succession, Bishop Bonner, of England, was in the habit of *beating* his clergy *corporally* when he was displeased with any thing. See Bishop Burnet's Abridgment of the History of the Reformation, p. 262.

clerical order, and, above all, of the episcopal, that Dr. C. is not a clergyman. In my poor opinion, a work could scarcely be devised calculated more seriously and justly to prejudice the whole clerical, and especially the episcopal cause,—and through that the cause of Christianity,—although I am far from believing that Dr. C. intended this. It has been his zeal in the service of a newly adopted communion that has probably led him to overshoot his mark. And the chief wonder is that any clergyman, and, above all, any bishop, unless indeed it were he of Rome, should eulogize or recommend such a work;—or how any Christian people, with *the New Testament in their hands*, can favour or countenance a book which places them, by the alleged authority of Heaven itself, under the yoke of a spiritual domination thus absolute, unlimited, and degrading.

It is related, among other ancient ecclesiastical legends, of a certain monk whom Satan would have drawn into heresy by asking his opinion on a certain point, that he prudently answered, “*Id credo quod credit ecclesia.*” [I believe what the church believes.] But, said Satan, thinking to ensnare him, “*Quid credit ecclesia?*” [What does the church believe?] The wary monk replied, “*Id quod ego credo.*” [What I believe.] And thus, says Jortin,* if Nestorius would have slept in his own bed, he should have said, “*Id credo quod credit sanctissimus Cyrillus.*” [I believe what the most holy Cyril believes.] Cyril was bishop of Alexandria in the fifth century. *Implicit faith*, indeed, is the very correlative of *implicit obedience*,—the necessary result of an absolute episcopacy, by divine right, and the genuine seed of all the monstrosities of the papacy itself. How different from the doctrine of “the great Paul,”—“Not for that we have dominion over your

* Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, vol. i, p. 16.

faith:" and of Peter,—“Neither as being lords over God’s heritage.”

But what makes the matter still worse, if worse can be, as if Dr. C. were determined to push his scheme of episcopal sovereignty to the utmost possible extreme of autocratical absolutism, he not only exhibits bishops as holding, by divine title, such actual lordship over God’s heritage generally, but over the presbyters in particular, of whom the bishop is “judge and punisher,” and against whom, however “partially” he may act,—in other words, tyrannize and sin,—“*there is no redress.*” The inspired Paul himself, had Timothy acted thus after he was constituted a bishop, it would seem according to Dr. C., would have had no authority to correct him, or to redress the presbyters; and the appeal even of Paul must have been “to God” alone. Such are bishops after Dr. C.’s pattern; and consequently, I suppose, were Paul himself or the whole college of apostles still on earth, with all their plenary powers, they would be incompetent to afford a particle of redress to any poor presbyter, deacon, or laic, against the partiality or tyranny of any bishop in this succession, though he were an Alexander VI.,—a very Nero among the popes themselves,—for, against such “there is no redress.”*

* If it seem incredible to the reader that any man, in the 19th century, can think of imposing such a scheme of episcopacy upon *Protestant* Christians, I refer him to the whole passage in Dr. C.’s book, p. 8,—remembering that it is to be taken in connection with his theory of Timothy’s episcopate at Ephesus by the ordination of Paul, and the “most unexceptionable” powers of a bishop elsewhere alleged by him, as above shown. What a system is here! Even the most strenuous advocates of the high church nonjuring bishops of England, who maintained the indefeasible, hereditary, divine right of kings, and the absolute unlawfulness of resistance on the part of the people, under any provocation or pretext whatever, yet admitted that a bishop might be deposed by an ecclesiastical council. Many Papists, too, admit this in regard even to the pope. But, if Bishop Timothy “act partially,” and, of course, sin, in this or in any other way, for the principle is the same, what is the remedy? An appeal to Paul? Nay: his “apostolical rod” must not touch the *bishop*. What then? An appeal to the whole college of apostles in council? Equally vain. The “rod” of the whole of them is unequal to this exigence. “There is no redress, and the appeal of Paul

A favourite position of the advocates of episcopal ultraism is, that the divine Founder of the Christian ministry intended, in its original institution, to conform it to the model of the Jewish priesthood and temple service. According to this theory it is alleged that the episcopate succeeds to the rank and prerogatives of the high-priesthood, while the presbyters take the place of the priests, and the deacons of the Levites. The groundlessness of this alleged parallel has been often exposed, and yet there are not wanting writers who continue to repeat it. Mosheim, indeed, charitably admits, as "highly probable, that they who first introduced this absurd comparison of offices so entirely distinct, did it rather through ignorance and error than through artifice and design;" though, as he remarks, the notion when once introduced, being industriously propagated, produced its natural pernicious effects, and was made a new source both of honour and profit to the doctors who had the good fortune to persuade the people into the belief of it.

If the Christian church was constituted on the plan of any Jewish model, there is much stronger evidence that it was that of the synagogue than that of the temple. This has been, as many think, very successfully demonstrated by Stillingfleet and others. I shall not, however, trouble the reader with a detail of the arguments which sustain this position; but shall content

is to God." So says Dr. C., and, be it remembered, according to him, the episcopate of Timothy, by divine right, is the one only essential model of a valid Christian episcopacy—without which there can be no true church, ministry, or ordinances—throughout the world, and until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But, were it even admitted that an oppressed presbyter might appeal to an ecclesiastical council, how, according to Dr. C., would it be necessary that it should be composed?

[A portion of what is here given in the form of a note seems to have been intended to take the place of a part of the text, but, as the necessary alterations were not made in the manuscript by the author, the whole is here inserted, though liable, in some degree, to the charge of repetition.—ED.]

myself with the single observation that, if the parallel be a correct one,—one founded in divine appointment as the allegation is,—then it is a most unfortunate one for *Protestant* Episcopalians; for, most unquestionably, in the alleged model there was but *one* high priest, and could be but one, legitimately, at a time. Consequently the pattern is violated in its most important and essential features,—in its very head,—if there be more than one bishop at a time over the whole Christian church, as there was but one high priest at a time over the whole Jewish church. At any rate, nothing short of one supreme, universal bishop can at all satisfy the parallel. Now this argument would be very appropriate, and entitled to the merit of consistency at least, in the mouth of the pope or of his partizans. But how it can serve the cause of *Protestant* Episcopalians, who maintain not only an unlimited plurality but the perfect official equality of all bishops throughout the world, is more than I have wit to penetrate. How the hereditariness of the Jewish high-priesthood is legitimately reconciled, in the parallel, with the celibacy of the Romish priesthood, I have not understood. A Protestant pope, should one ever be set up, might more consistently put in a claim for this feature in it.

Again, however, I am reminded that Dr. C. stops not at the pattern even of the high-priesthood of Aaron. The supreme, controlling power of “Moses,” with the subordinate rule of the seventy elders, he thinks “a form of government as much like the episcopal as one thing can be like another,” p. 116. If he means the *papal* episcopal, some analogy must be granted, so far at least as to the “form” of one and one only supreme earthly chief over the whole people. But if the *protestant* episcopal be meant, then even the trace of analogy must be denied; and I should suppose all *Protestants*, Dr. C., I am sorry to say, excepted, would join in the denial.

Indeed Dr. C. seems not satisfied that even Moses' government was that of the archetype in the divine will and preference. Have we then not yet reached his ultimatum of individual absolutism? It seems not. In his opinion that part of the model which consisted in the appointment of *elders* to assist Moses "was not the plan God instituted for Moses." This he expressly asserts; and then, that there may be no mistake about it, immediately adds in the succeeding sentence, "He [God] set him [Moses] over the people alone," p. 117. The meaning, doubtless, is,—Set him alone over the people. He seems even dissatisfied with the meek and diffident Moses for beseeching "God to give him help to rule over the people;" and adds that, although the request was granted, it was, nevertheless, with "marked displeasure" on the part of the Almighty. The whole paragraph, in connection with the preceding, demonstrates, to the best of my understanding, that Dr. C. would have thought it better if Moses had continued to rule the people "alone" without the help of elders. And if so in the Jewish type, as alleged, why not in the Christian antitype? If his holiness, the sovereign pontiff, ever saw or shall yet see this argument, it might well bring from him an offering of gratitude to the author, but how it can from any *protestant* bishop, elder, deacon, or laic, I must again profess myself utterly at a loss to imagine. Scarcely less gratitude, one would think, is due from Rome for the very strong testimony alleged out of Irenæus, by Dr. C., in behalf of that "greatest, most ancient, and universally known church, founded and constituted at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul."—"For with this church," [Dr. C. himself marks it emphatically, as is here done,] *on account of its greater pre-eminence, it is necessary that every church should agree; that is, those which are in all respects faithful,*" pp. 71, 72. If the argument be a good one in the *episcopal* controversy, why not in every

other? Thank you, protestant Dr., might Rome well say.

I have heard of a Protestant Episcopal clergyman, not one thousand miles from where I write, who, in labouring to seduce one of our ministers from his fidelity to his own church, I regret to say it, by the mercenary temptation, among other means, of a vacant parish, (a species of conduct in which there is too much reason to believe he has not been singular,) alleged in argument that the Protestant Episcopal Church in this country is the chief barrier to the progress of the Papists; and ours a hinderance to the successful resistance of this barrier. And this gentleman, I believe, was also an admirer and recommender of Dr. C.'s book. With the Protestant Episcopal Church and its clergy generally, we neither seek nor desire controversy. We should be most happy to agree with them, especially in withstanding sin and Satan in every form. But if the extravagant pretensions of Rome are ever to be successfully resisted, surely we may say of the work before us,—

“Non talibus armis, nec defensoribus istis.”

After drawing such a picture of episcopacy, and attempting to establish it on such a basis, Dr. C. remarks,—“Of this state of things in the church, evidence more and more abounds as we *progress* through the third century. For this he assigns the following curious reasons:—“Because,” as he continues, “more and more learning was enlisted in the cause of the Christian religion, and because more of the writings of the fathers of the succeeding centuries have been preserved.” It seems not to have occurred to him, or at least not to have been judged expedient to be mentioned to his readers, that it was rather “because” of the increasing corruptions and usurpations that ensued, through which the whole face of the church was changed, and the

bishops of the succeeding ages, leaving the simplicity of their predecessors, were elevated to the rank, the titles, the immunities, and the powers of sovereign lords. To deny this fact, one must either be ignorant of all history or shut his eyes against its clearest light.

The seeds of this state of things were sown, I grant, though probably without even dreaming of their ultimate fruit, at a comparatively early period. Even *Cyprian*, the famous bishop of Carthage in the middle of the third century, whose writings are as confidently cited by some eminent men *against* the exclusive claims of diocesan episcopacy by divine institution, as by others *for* them, seems, undesignedly, to have at times used language in the florid style of his country and age, which Papists allege as containing the very essential principles of the popedom. I say undesignedly,—because Cyprian himself showed this in his own noble resistance of the imperious Stephen of Rome. One of the famous sayings of Cyprian, as alleged in the no less famous Council of Trent, was, that throughout the whole Christian church “there is *but one bishopricke*, and every bishop holdeth a part thereof *in solidum*.”*

This ingenious and fruitful idea was more largely developed and amplified in the same council by Father Laynez, general of the Jesuits. That saying of Cy-

* Historie of the Councell of Trent, by Fra Paolo Sarpi, p. 599. There is a singular expression seeming to look this way, though obscurely, in one of the epistles of Cornelius, bishop of Rome, to Fabius, bishop of Antioch. He is speaking of his rival, Novatus, as Eusebius names him, (or Novatian, according to Mosheim,) whom he berates most roundly, and, among other things, remarks as follows:—“Wherefore this jolly defender of the gospell was ignorant that there ought to be but one bishop in the catholicke [universal] church.” (Eusebius’ Ecclesiastical History, lib. vi, ch. 42. The original Greek of Eusebius, as quoted by Lord King, is, “Ουκ ηπιστατο ένα επισκοπον δειν ειναι εν καθολικη εκκλησια.” And his reference is to chap. xliii, according to the Greek original.) Why did Cornelius style the Church of Rome the Catholic Church? Did Cyprian borrow the idea, or did Cornelius take it from Cyprian? They were contemporaries and correspondents.

prian, he argued, "is to bee expounded that the whole power is placed in one pastor, without division, who doth impart and communicate it to his fellow-ministers as cause doth require. And in this sence *Ciprian* maketh the Apostolique *Sea* like unto a roote, an head, a fountaine, and the sunne; shewing, by these comparisons, that jurisdiction is essential in that alone, and in others by derivation or participation. And this is the meaning," he adds, "of the words so much used by antiquity, that *Peter* and the pope have fulnesse of power, and the others are of their charge." As a matter of curiosity, it may perhaps gratify the reader to see a little more of the Jesuit general's amplification of the idea of Cyprian. "And that he [the pope, continues the general] is the onely pastor, is plainly proved by the words of CHRIST, when he said, He hath other sheepe which he will gather together, and so one sheepfold should be made, and one shepheard. The shepheard meant in that place cannot be CHRIST, because he would not speake in the future, that there shall be one shepheard, himself then being a shepheard, and therefore it must be understood of another shepheard which was to be constituted after him, which can be no other but *Peter* and his successors." To cap the climax of this argument, the ingenious general, criticising that passage of Christ to Peter, "Feed my sheep," avers that the term "sheep" there signifies "*animals*, which have no part or judgment in governing themselves."* I by no means intend to insinuate, however, that this criticism is concurred in by Dr. C.; for, although he maintains, as "most unexceptionable," the sentiment alleged from Ignatius of implicit subjection to the bishop, as "in the place of God," yet it is, I presume of course, as men, and not as brute "*animals*;"—although I must confess, on farther thought, that such a yoke would seem to be

* Historie of the Councell of Trent, by Fra Paolo Sarpi, p. 611.

rather more galling on the necks of rational and Christian men than even on those of brute “animals.”*

But as Dr. C. makes the testimony of Ignatius, identified as he thinks it with that of Polycarp and Irenæus afterward, a main pillar of his castle, I am not yet done with this father. The epistles ascribed to him are the first of the ecclesiastical writing of antiquity which mentioned bishops, presbyters, and deacons, as three distinct orders in the Christian church. He is supposed by some to have written about the sixteenth year of the second century; and by some even earlier. Dr. C. quotes the opinion of Dr. Lardner, as before stated, that his smaller epistles as well as the larger may have been tampered with by the Arians or the orthodox, or both; and from this, after a little preparation of the reader, in regard to the Arian controversy, he skips to the conclusion,—“It is evident, therefore, that there is not the slightest ground to suspect the interpolation of passages to favour episcopacy.” Now, to me, this is strange logic. How the admission that they may have been tampered with in one important respect makes it “evident” that there is not the slightest ground to suspect that they have been tampered with in any other, I cannot perceive. Let the argument be put into form, and it runs thus:—

The larger epistles of Ignatius are certainly spurious; and even the smaller may have been tampered with by the Arians or the orthodox, or both.

Therefore, it is evident that there is not the slightest ground to suspect that they were ever interpolated on the subject of episcopacy.

* After Christianity became the established and ruling religion, tumults, seditions, and even massacres, sometimes took place at the elections of bishops. This was the natural result of such doctrines of episcopal dignity and supremacy. See Jortin's *Remarks on Ecclesiastical History*, vol. i, p. 414.

And yet this is very much the manner in which Dr. C. draws conclusions and makes assertions in various places of his book.

The interpolations of the epistles of Ignatius being admitted by eminent and candid critics of all parties, it cannot be safe to found any decision in this controversy on the testimony of an author with whose works transcribers have confessedly made so free. If they were interpolated with regard to important doctrines, why may they not have been also in regard to church polity? Did not the indisputable progress of clerical usurpation, and especially of episcopal domination and arrogance, in the following ages, afford at least an equal temptation to such *pious frauds*? The "*Apostolical Constitutions*" is also a work of antiquity, pretended to have been written even by the twelve apostles and St. Paul together with Clemens for their *amanuensis*. It is a work, too, the sentiments of which on episcopacy, as I have before shown in a quotation from Dr. Jortin, are obviously similar to those ascribed to Ignatius; and it is not a little remarkable, in this connection, that such critics as Le Clerc and the "learned and ingenious" Bruno, as Dr. Jortin testifies, had a suspicion that an *Arian* bishop of the fourth century, Leontius, was the inventor or the interpolator of these Constitutions also.* For, be it remembered that, not long after their rise in the fourth century, the Arians not only had their bishops, but, through the favour of Constantine in his latter days, and especially of his son Constantius, became the dominant sect. And how likely the Arian as well as the orthodox bishops of that and some following ages may have been to perpetrate such impositions on the ignorant may be conjectured from the state assumed by this said Arian prelate, Leontius. It is cer-

* Dr. Campbell thinks they were a compilation probably begun in the third century, and ended in the fourth or fifth. Lectures, p. 99.

tain, says Jortin, that he carried his head high enough ; and sent word to the empress Eusebia, who is said to have been haughty, that he would not comply with her request and pay her a visit, unless she would promise to bow down before him and receive his blessing, and then to stand up while he sat, until he should give her leave to sit down ; which put the lady into a violent rage.*

Now even the Apostolical Constitutions might be of service on several accounts, as they contain many things undoubtedly true, in regard both to the doctrines and the discipline of the ancient church ; but the whole are so blended with insertions of a later date that it is now beyond human skill, as the last-named eminent critic remarks, to make the separation with any certainty. And, should their authority appear only ambiguous, as he had before observed, it would be our duty to reject them, lest we should adopt, as divine doctrines, the commandments of men. This is precisely our view of the epistles ascribed to Ignatius. That he did write epistles, shortly before his martyrdom, is not in the least doubted. Neither is it disputed that what he wrote, especially in regard to facts within his own knowledge, or to the traditions received from the apostles or their contemporaries, could we separate with any certainty what is genuine and authentic from what is spurious and false, would be entitled to high regard. *Against* our opponents, indeed, in this controversy, whatever is to our purpose in the testimony even of Ignatius, a witness of their own introduction, may well be urged ; for though, as Dr. Campbell judiciously remarks, the work ascribed to him is, with reason, suspected to have been interpolated with a view to aggrandize the episcopal order, it was never suspected of any interpolation with a view to lessen it.†

* Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, vol. i, p. 156.

† Dr. Jortin, after rejecting altogether the larger epistles ascribed to Igna-

Among the arguments which render suspicious the integrity of the epistles ascribed to Ignatius, as regards church polity, the following are advanced by Dr. Campbell:—

“What makes his testimony the more to be suspected is, first, because the forementioned distinction [of three orders] is so frequently and officiously obtruded on the reader, sometimes not in the most modest and becoming terms, as was the manner of the apostles, when speaking of their own authority; and obedience is enjoined to the bishop and presbyters, even where the injunction cannot be deemed either natural or pertinent, as in his epistle to Polycarp, who was himself a bishop. Secondly, because the names bishop and presbyter are never used by him for expressing the same office, as they had been uniformly used by all who had preceded him, and were occasionally used by most of the ecclesiastic writers of that century. Thirdly and principally, because Polycarp, a contemporary and survivor of Ignatius, in a letter to the Philippians, quoted in a former discourse, pointing out the duties of all ranks, pastors and people, makes mention of only two orders of ministers, to wit: presbyters and deacons, in the same manner as Luke, and

tius as clearly spurious, adds the observation, that although the shorter are, on many accounts, preferable to the larger, yet he would not affirm that even they had undergone no alteration at all.—*Remarks on Ecclesiastical History*, vol. i, p. 227. The same author says that “Origen, and other ancient Christians, ascribe to our Saviour this saying:—*Γινεσθε δοκιμοι τραπεζιται, ταμεν αποδοκιμαζοντες, το δε καλον κατεχοντες*; that is, *act like skilful bankers, rejecting what is bad, and retaining what is good*. This precept,” continues the archdeacon, “is proper for all who apply themselves to the study of religious antiquities. Good and bad money is offered to them; and they ought to beware of the coin which will not pass current in the republic of letters and in the critical world, and of that which is found light when weighed in the balance of the sanctuary.” *Ibid.*, pp. 420, 421. This advice, whether truly handed down from our Saviour or not, is worthy of a man of letters and a Christian divine; and the latter part of it especially the plainest reader may follow, and will do well to follow, though he may not have the good fortune to be of the republic of letters, or conversant with the critical world. Let him weigh *in the balance of the sanctuary*, then, the extravagant episcopal ultraism which Dr. C. so often alleges from the sophisticated Ignatius, as *essential to the very being of a church*, and the result is not feared.

Paul, and Clement had done before him; nay, and recommends to the people submission to them, and only to them, in terms which, I must say, were neither proper nor even decent, if these very ministers had a superior in the church to whom they themselves, as well as the people, were subject. To me, the difference between these two writers appears by no means as a diversity in style, but as a repugnancy in sentiment. They cannot be both made applicable to the same state of the church; so that we are forced to conclude, that in the writings of one or the other there must have been something spurious or interpolated. Now I have heard no argument urged against the authenticity of Polycarp's letter equally cogent as some of the arguments employed against the authenticity of the epistles of Ignatius. And, indeed, the state of the church, in no subsequent period, can well account for such a forgery as the epistle of the former to the Philippians; whereas the ambition of the ecclesiastics, for which some of the following centuries were remarkable, renders it extremely easy to account for the nauseous repetition of obedience and subjection to the bishop, presbyters, and deacons, to be found in the letters of Ignatius.*

Again:—"It is not only what we find singular in them for so early a period, relating to the different orders of ministers in the church, which has raised suspicions of their authenticity, or, at least, of their integrity; there are other causes which have co-operated in producing the same effect: one is, the style, in many places, is not suited to the simplicity of the times immediately succeeding the times of the apostles. It abounds with inflated epithets, unlike the humble manner of the inspired writers; and in this, as in other respects, seems more formed on that which became fashionable after the acquisition of greater external importance, which

* Lecture on Ecclesiastical History, pp. 96, 7.

opulence never fails to bring, and after the discussion of certain theological questions agitated in the third and fourth centuries, to which we find, sometimes, a manifest allusion. What I am going to observe has much the appearance of anachronism, which often betrays the hand of the interpolator. The expression, *the church which is in Syria*, occurs twice. Now nothing can be more dissimilar to the dialect which had prevailed in the apostolic age, and which continued to prevail in the second century. Except when *the church* denoted the whole Christian community, it meant no more than a single congregation.”* Now there were many churches in Syria in the days of Ignatius, and many bishops. Indeed when, through the increase of converts, a bishop’s parish came to contain more people than could be comprehended in one congregation, the custom continued, in contradiction to propriety, of still calling his charge *a church*, in the singular number. But it was not till after the distinction made between the metropolitan and the suffragans, which was about a century later, that this use originated, of calling all the churches of a province *the church* (not the churches) of such a province. To this they were gradually led by analogy. The metropolitan presided among the provincial bishops, as the bishop among the presbyters. The application of the term was, after the rise of patriarchal jurisdiction, extended still further. All that was under the jurisdiction of the archbishop, or patriarch, was his church.

But it is not the style, only, which has raised suspicion; it is chiefly the sentiments. “Attend to the bishop,” says Ignatius to Polycarp, “that God may

* Lord King says that he found the word *church* once used by Cyprian [about the middle of the third century] for a collection of many particular churches; but that, except in this instance, he did not remember ever to have met with it in this sense in any writings, either of Cyprian or the rest of the fathers; but, whenever they would speak of the Christians in any kingdom or province, they always said, in the plural, *the churches*; never in the singular, *the church*, of such a kingdom or province.—Pp. 4, 5.

attend to you. I pledge my soul for theirs who are subject to the bishop, presbyters, and deacons. Let my part in God be with them.” *Ἀντιψυχὸν ἐγὼ τῶν ὑποτασσομένων τῷ ἐπισκοπῷ κ. τ. λ.*; which Cotelerius renders *Devovear ego pro iis qui subditi sunt episcopo, &c.* Admit that, from his adopting the plural of the imperative *προσεχετε*, in the beginning of the paragraph, he is to be considered as addressing the congregation of Smyrna, and not the bishop to whom the letter is directed, is there nothing exceptionable in what he says? Was it the doctrine of Ignatius, that all that is necessary to salvation in a Christian is an implicit subjection to the bishop, presbyters, and deacons? Be it that he means only in spiritual matters, is this the style of the apostles to their Christian brethren? Was it thus that Ignatius exhibited to his followers the pattern which had been given by that great apostle, who could say of himself and his fellow apostles, appealing for his voucher to the people’s experience of their ministry, *We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants, for Jesus’ sake.*”*

On the contrary, as the same author continues a little after, “is it not his predominant scope, [that of the assumer of Ignatius’ name,] in those letters, to preach himself and other ecclesiastics, inculcating upon the people the most submissive, unlimited, and blind obedience to all of the clerical order? This is an everlasting topic, to which he never slips an opportunity of recurring, in season and out of season. The only consistent declaration which would have suited the author of these epistles, must have been the reverse of Paul’s. We preach not Christ Jesus the Lord, but so far only as may conduce to the increase of our influence, and the exaltation of our power; nay, for an object so important, we are not ashamed to preach up ourselves your

* Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, pp. 100–102.

masters, with unbounded dominion over your faith, and consequently over both soul and body.”*

Such, in the judgment of Dr. Campbell, are the epistles which Dr. C. regards as “most unexceptionable,” and which, as before said, constitute a main pillar of his hierarchal edifice.

To strengthen this pillar, moreover, he endeavours to make out that the testimony of Polycarp and Irenæus is identical with that in these epistles.

Polycarp was a contemporary and survivor of Ignatius. His writings, in the order of time, were between those of Ignatius and Irenæus; and he suffered martyrdom probably a little before the middle of the second century, or soon after; for chronologists do not exactly agree on this point.† Dr. C. quotes him as saying in his epistle to the Philippians, “The epistles of Ignatius which he wrote unto us, together with what others of his have come to our hands, we have sent to you, according to your order; which are subjoined to this epistle; by which you may be greatly profited,—for they treat of faith, and patience, and of all things that pertain to edification in the Lord Jesus.”‡ This, with his strong attestation of Ignatius’s personal worth and triumphant end, Dr. C. says, “show that Polycarp completely agreed with Ignatius in relation to the great concerns of the church. All that we see, therefore, [he continues,] in the passages *in Italics* in the epistles of Ignatius, [that is, what Dr. C. puts in Italics in these epistles, as printed in his appendix,] stands supported by the evidence of Polycarp, as completely as if he had himself written those epistles.”‡

Hold, dear sir. This is another conclusion too hastily

* Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, pp. 100–102.

† There is also considerable diversity among critics as to the exact date of Polycarp’s epistle. Dr. Jortin says it is supposed to have been written A. D. 107; Dr. Campbell that it must certainly have been written a considerable time before the middle of the second century.

‡ P. 70.

sprung to. It is a mere *petitio principii*,—a sheer begging of the question. It must first be proved that all those passages were in the copy of those epistles which came under the eye of Polycarp; for this, you ought to be aware, is disputed, for reasons already given. Until this difficulty, therefore, is removed, this argument is deficient in an essential link.

The same remarks are applicable to Dr. C.'s attempt to identify the testimony of Irenæus with the passages which he has marked as specially observable under the name of Ignatius. It must first be proved that Irenæus ever saw them. This foundation of the argument must be established before the superstructure can stand.

But let us now review the evidence which these early fathers furnish *against* the system of Dr. C. For, as has been already observed, even the epistles of Ignatius in this respect are not supposed to have been interpolated; since, for this the state and progress of ecclesiastical affairs in the following ages evidently furnish no probable motive, as they plainly did for such freedoms on the opposite side.

Before I proceed to this, however, I beg leave to remind the reader that there was one other earlier Christian father, after the apostles, of whose writings Dr. C. seems content to make but little use: I mean Clemens Romanus—Clement of Rome. The writings of this father are characterized by Dr. Campbell as “the most respectable remains we have of Christian antiquity, next to the inspired writings.” He then proceeds thus: “The piece I allude to is the first epistle of Clemens Romanus to the Corinthians, as it is commonly styled, but as it styles itself, ‘The Epistle of the Church of God at Rome to the Church of God at Corinth.’ It is the same Clement whom Paul (Philip. iv, 3) calls his fellow-labourer, and one of those whose names are in the book of life. There we are told, chap. xlii, that ‘the apostles, having preached the gospel in countries

and towns, constituted the first-fruits of their ministry, whom they approved by the Spirit, bishops and deacons of those who should believe.' And in order to satisfy us that he did not use these words in a vague manner, for church officers in general, but as expressive of all the distinct orders that were established by them in the church, he adds: 'Nor was this a new device, inasmuch as bishops and deacons had been pointed out many ages before,—for thus says the Scripture, "*I will constitute their bishops in righteousness, and their deacons in faith.*"' The passage quoted is the last clause of the 17th verse of the 60th chapter of Isaiah. It is thus rendered in our version: 'I will make thine officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness.' Whether this venerable ancient has given a just translation, or made a proper application of this prediction, is not the point in question; it is enough that it evinces what his notion was of the established ministers then in the church. And if (as no critic ever questioned, and as his own argument necessarily requires,) he means the same by bishops with those who in the Acts are called *πρεσβυτεροι*, whom the apostles Paul and Barnabas ordained in every church, and whom Clement in other parts of this epistle also calls *πρεσβυτεροι*,—namely, the ordinary teachers; it would seem strange that the bishop, properly so called, the principal officer of all, should be the only one in his account of whom the Holy Spirit, in sacred writ, had given no previous intimation. Nay, do not the words of this father manifestly imply that any other office in the church than the two he had mentioned, might be justly styled a *new device* or invention? Dr. Pearson, in his *Vindiciæ Ignatianæ*, insists much that whenever any of the fathers purposely enumerate the different orders in the church, they mention always three. If the above account given by Clement is not to be considered an enumeration, I know not what to call it. If two were actually all the orders then in the

church, could he have introduced the mention of them by telling us he was about to give a list or catalogue, or even to make an enumeration of the ecclesiastical degrees? Is this a way of prefacing the mention of so small a number as two? It is this writer's express design to acquaint us what the apostles did for accommodating the several churches they planted, in pastors and assistants. And can we suppose he would have omitted the chief point of all, namely, that they supplied every church with a prelate, ruler, or head, if any one had really been entitled to this distinction?

"If it should be urged that under the term *ἐπισκοποι*, both functions of bishop and presbyter are comprehended, it is manifest that, as it was the writer's scope to mark the different offices established as being predicted by the prophets in the Old Testament, there cannot be a stronger indication that there was then no material, if any, difference between them, and that they were properly denominated and considered as one office. The appellatives also by which they are denoted, are invariably employed by him in the plural number as being equally applicable to all. It is said in chap. i, *τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ὑμῶν ὑποτάσσομενοι*, submitting to your governors or guides. It is remarkable also that the word *ἡγουμενος*, here used in the plural of all their pastors, is one of those terms which came afterward to be appropriated to the bishop. Nay, since it must be admitted, that in the New Testament, as well as in the ancient Christian monument just now quoted, the words *ἐπισκοπος* and *πρεσβυτερος* are not occasionally, but uniformly, used synonymously; the very discovery that there was not any distinctive appellation for such an office as is now called bishop is not of inconsiderable weight to prove that it did not exist. We know that every other office, ordinary and extraordinary, is sufficiently distinguished by an appropriated name.

"But I cannot help observing further concerning this

epistle of Clement, that though it was written with the special view of conciliating the minds of the Corinthians to their pastors, commonly in this letter called presbyters, some of whom the people had turned out of their offices, or expelled (απο της επισκοπης) from their bishoprick, as his words literally imply, there is not the most distant hint of any superior to these πρεσβυτεροι, whose proper province it was, if there had been such a superior, to inspect their conduct and to judge of it; and whose authority the people had treated most contemptuously, in presuming, without so much as consulting him, to degrade their presbyters. It was natural, it was even unavoidable, to take notice in such a case of the usurpation whereof they had been guilty upon their bishop—the chief shepherd, who had the oversight of all the under shepherds, the presbyters as well as of the people, and to whom alone, if there had been such a person, those presbyters were accountable for their conduct. Yet there is not so much as a syllable in all this long letter that points this way. On the contrary, he argues from the power with which those presbyters themselves were vested, and of which they could not be justly stripped whilst they discharged faithfully the duties of their office. I will appeal to any candid person who is tolerably conversant in the Christian antiquities, whether he thinks it possible that in the third century such a letter, on such an emergence, could have been written to any Christian congregation by any man in his senses, wherein there was no more notice taken of the bishop, who was then, in a manner, every thing in his own church, than if he were nothing at all. And that there was so great a difference, in less than two centuries, in people's style and sentiments on this article, is an uncontrovertible proof that in that period things came to stand on a very different foot. This epistle of Clement, who was a disciple of Paul, appears indeed from one passage to have been written so early as before

the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem, and consequently before the seventy-second year of Christ, according to the vulgar computation. And if so, it was written before the Apocalypse, and perhaps some other parts of the sacred canon. Nothing, therefore, that is not Scripture, can be of greater authority in determining a point of fact, as is the question about the constitution of the apostolical church."*

It is proper to note here, that Dr. Campbell afterward adds a general observation, to which he invites the attention of the judicious and candid, that what he has advanced does not affect the lawfulness, or even, in certain circumstances, the expediency of the episcopal model; but only exposes the arrogance of pretending to a *jus divinum*, [a divine right.] He is satisfied (as he continues, with a manly and Christian frankness worthy of all commendation and of more general imitation) that no form of polity can plead such an exclusive charter as that phrase, in its present acceptance, is understood to imply,—that the claim is clearly the offspring of sectarian bigotry and ignorance.—That in regard to those polities which obtain at present in the different Christian sects, he ingenuously owns that he has not found one of all that he has examined, which can be said perfectly to coincide with the model of the apostolic church. Some indeed are nearer, and some are more remote; but this we may say with freedom, that if a particular form of polity had been essential to the church, it would have been laid down in a different manner in the sacred books.—That the very hypothesis, in his opinion, is repugnant to the spiritual nature of the evangelical economy, and savours grossly of the conceit with which the Jews were intoxicated of the Messiah's secular kingdom,—a conceit with which many like-minded Christians are intoxicated still.†

* Lectures, pp. 70–72.

† Ib., pp. 73, 74.

Let it be observed also, that I quote Dr. Campbell freely, not because I agree with him in all respects, but because, in the main points in this controversy, as between high church and us, his able work fully sustains our views as above stated.

I now return to Ignatius. In speaking of his epistles Dr. C. remarks, p. 18, that "in every instance the bishop is mentioned in such terms as show that he was *the only one* in the church addressed." This Dr. C. marks emphatically, as is here done. The assertion is a very extraordinary one, and, I suppose, cannot have been intended to convey the meaning which the face of it imports. For if the reader will turn to the epistles, he will find, on the contrary, that "in every instance," except the epistle to Polycarp, it is "the church" that is addressed. And although Dr. C. maintains that without a bishop, such as he describes, there is no church, yet I am not aware that he has yet taken upon himself to assert that the bishop alone is "the church."

But, passing this obscure passage, as perhaps merely wanting in felicity of expression, is it not singular that Ignatius, in addressing Polycarp, himself a bishop, and a disciple of St. John, should say to him, "*Hearken unto the bishop, that God also may hearken unto you. My soul be security for them that submit to their bishop, with their presbyters and deacons.*" Yet so Dr. C. cites him; and this is one of the passages which he specially marks with Italics, as above.* The passage itself, in such an epistle, is foisted as impertinently as the language is profane, and the sentiment antichristian.

Dr. C. refers to Dr. Miller, as observing that several of the early fathers "expressly represent *presbyters* as the successors of the apostles: among others *Ignatius*." And afterward adds, "The reader may easily determine how far this assertion is correct, by turning to the

* Appendix, p. xxiv.

passages in *Italic letters*, in the appendix to these pages."*

Well, I have done so :—confining myself to the passages marked by Dr. C. himself. And what does the reader suppose is the result? Is he at all prepared to anticipate that several of these very passages expressly confirm Dr. Miller's assertion? If, considering the boldness with which Dr. C. makes the reference, he deem this incredible, then I assure him that I quote them as they stand in Dr. C.'s own appendix, and as marked by himself; except that I put in small capitals the words which represent presbyters as successors of the apostles, which Dr. C. leaves in Italics, in common with the rest of the passage.

In the epistle to the Magnesians, sect. 6, Ignatius says, "*I exhort you that ye study to do all things in divine concord: your bishop presiding in the place of God, YOUR PRESBYTERS IN THE PLACE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE APOSTLES, and your deacons most dear to me being intrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ.*"†

In the epistle to the Trallians, sect. 2, he says, "*For whereas ye are subject to your bishop, as to Jesus Christ, ye appear to me to live not after the manner of men, but according to Jesus Christ. It is therefore necessary, that as ye do, so without your bishop you should do nothing: ALSO, BE YE SUBJECT TO YOUR PRESBYTERS, AS TO THE APOSTLES OF JESUS CHRIST OUR HOPE; in whom if we walk, we shall be found in him. The deacons also, as being the ministers of the mysteries of Jesus Christ.*"‡

Again: in the same epistle to the Trallians, sect. 3, he says: "*In like manner let all reverence the deacons as Jesus Christ, and the bishop as the Father, and THE PRESBYTERS AS THE SANHEDRIM OF GOD, AND COLLEGE OF THE APOSTLES.*"‡

In the epistle to the Smyrneans, he says: "*See that*

* Dr. C. p. 19.

† Appendix, p. x.

‡ Ib., p. xii.

*ye all follow your bishop, as Jesus Christ, the Father ; and THE PRESBYTERY AS THE APOSTLES ; and reverence the deacons as the command of God."**

An examination of the above passages may aid the reader in forming a judgment of the incautiousness, to use no stronger term, with which Dr. C. makes the most positive and extraordinary affirmations. Of that cited above from the 6th section of the epistle to the Magnesians, he says, "Take the whole together, and the meaning is precisely the reverse of that which Dr. Miller represents it to be," p. 19. Now Dr. Miller's statement was, that Ignatius in that passage represents *presbyters* as the successors of the apostles. This then, at present, is the single question ; and Dr. C. must be held to it. Does that whole passage of Ignatius, taken together, represent presbyters as the successors of the apostles, or does it represent "precisely the reverse ?" The former is Dr. Miller's assertion, the latter is Dr. C.'s. I leave the reader, after looking back at the passage, to judge between them.

Dr. C. himself, indeed, very soon afterward, p. 20, seems smitten with the conviction that Ignatius does "represent the presbyters as standing in the place of the apostles." For he there adds, (after mentioning Dr. Miller's farther quotation of the 3d section of the epistle to the Trallians also,) "If these passages represent the presbyters as standing in the place of the apostles, they place the bishop as far above them as he could by any language be represented to be." I grant it:—even as far—I pause, and am shocked to repeat such language,—yes, even as far as God is above the apostles ! Certainly language cannot go higher. It is indeed, reader, a sober verity. Dr. C. himself, a little after, on the same page, repeats with manifest approbation: "They represent the bishop as standing in the place of God."

* Appendix, p. xxii.

Such then is a Christian bishop, according to the epistles of Ignatius, which Dr. C. pronounces "most unexceptionable;" and such, consequently, in the judgment of Dr. C., is a Christian bishop still, "standing in the place of God, as far above presbyters,—and certainly, of course, above deacons, laics, and the whole church beside his single self,—as God above the apostles!" If deeds of ineffable atrocity may be expressed as outheroing Herod, surely the challenging of such insufferable, even infinite pre-eminence for the episcopal dignity and authority, may not inappositely be branded as outpopping (if I may coin this term for the special occasion) the pope himself.

In truth, it is very far worse than popery. For, according to popery, there is but one supreme sovereign bishop, the absolute ruler of the whole church. But according to this scheme, each and every bishop is such within his diocese, of whatever extent. And thus the entire church of Christ on earth must be subjected, if this notion prevail, to the absolute domination of an unlimited number of popes, instead of one,—against whom, however arbitrary, partial, or oppressive their acts may be, there is no redress, and no appeal but to God.*

In remarking on the writings of Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, about the middle of the third century, Dr. Jortin observes, that there are many passages in them containing high notions of episcopal authority and eccle-

* See Dr. Cook's draft of the episcopate of Bishop Timothy, the model by divine title, on his plan, of all succeeding bishops, p. 8. In the Litany of the Church of England there was formerly this petition,—"*From the tyranny of the bishop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities, good Lord deliver us.*" By order of Queen Elizabeth, who was somewhat tenderly concerned not to offend the pope, this passage was struck out. But surely Protestants of the present day may most rationally, most scripturally, and most devoutly pray,—From an episcopal scheme, which claims by divine right the elevation of fallen, fallible men to such dignity and power above their fellow-men, their fellow-Christians, and their fellow-ministers, good Lord deliver us!

siastical jurisdiction. "While he strenuously opposed the domination of one pope," continues the learned and ingenious archdeacon, "he seemed in some manner to make as many popes as bishops, and mere *arithmetical naughts* of the rest of the Christians; which yet, I believe," he adds, "was not his intent."*

Charity would lead us to hope as much of the *intentions* of Dr. C.

Whatever rank then Dr. C. may be disposed to assert for such bishops as he contends for, if presbyters stand in the place of the apostles, this is enough for us. We neither ask nor wish any thing more or higher. And whether this be not the explicit testimony of those epistles of Ignatius which Dr. C. avers to be genuine and most unexceptionable, I shall submit to the judgment of the reader, after laying before him the following recapitulation of the specific clauses touching this point.

"*Your presbyters in the place of the council of the apostles.*" Epistle to the Magnesians, sect. 6.

That is, as the preceding clause demonstrates, "your presbyters [presiding] in the place of the council of the apostles."

"*Also be ye subject to your presbyters as to the apostles of Jesus Christ our hope.*" Epistle to the Trallians, sect. 2.

"*And the presbyters as the sanhedrim of God, and college of the apostles.*" *Ib.*, sect. 3.

That is, as the context shows, Let all reverence the presbyters as the sanhedrim of God, and college of the apostles.

"*And the presbytery as the apostles.*" Epistle to the Smyrneans, sect. 8.

That is, as the context here also demonstrates, See that ye all follow the presbytery as the apostles.

I remark here by the way, and shall have occasion to

* Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, vol. i, p. 415.

notice it again, that by the "presbytery," in this place, is incontestably meant—not an office—but the body of presbyters, as contradistinguished from the bishop and the deacons, severally, and from them both together. The reader will please bear in mind this ancient use of the term by an apostolical father, as Dr. C. contends, a disciple of the apostles, and so near the apostolic age. It will be important in the argument in another place.

It may be proper also to observe at this stage, that it is not my purpose, or my place, to volunteer in the vindication of Dr. Miller. In the main point,—the validity of ordination by presbyters,—that eminent divine and we entirely agree. In others we differ, and, I trust, agree to differ; neither of us regarding a difference of judgment or practice in matters of polity, a sufficient occasion for schism among Christians, in the true Scriptural sense of this term; but still recognising the communion of each other as within the covenant mercies of the Father of mercies, and the comprehensive pale of the catholic church.*

I may be permitted here also to say, that a very large portion of Dr. C.'s authorities and arguments against the Presbyterian scheme of parity, as advocated by Dr. Miller, are entirely irrelevant and harmless, as will hereafter be shown,† in regard to the Methodist Episcopal polity, which recognises both an order of bishops, officially superior to presbyters, and the order of deacons as ministers of Christ.

In combating Dr. Miller, Dr. C. occasionally avails himself of a reference to Methodist usages, to help out his argument. For example:—from the language of Ignatius to Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, charging him to let his assemblies be more full,—to inquire into all by name,—and not to overlook the men or maid ser-

* See note B, Appendix. [Never written.—Ed.]

† [This the author probably designed to do in the second part of his Essay, which, as has been already stated, was never written.—Ed.]

vants ; Dr. Miller contends that the bishop of that day was the pastor of a single church, and not a diocesan in the modern sense. Dr. C. answers, "This can be done without personal acquaintance. The preachers of the Methodist travelling connection on many circuits have above a thousand, and on some twelve or fourteen hundred persons under their care, sometimes spread over circuits of fifty or sixty miles in extent, and they inquire *into all by name*,—not overlooking the men and maid servants,—*every four weeks*."* This is certainly a high compliment to us. I only wish it were strictly merited.

But if our economy,—may I say, without seeming to assume too much, our excellent economy,—helps Dr. C. out in one instance, does not justice require that Dr. Miller should have the benefit of it in another? for it is in truth a middle ground, which certainly solves very many of the difficulties between the two extremes, and on which the contending parties might happily meet, were there mutually that disposition to Christian concord which we should be happy to see prevail. Dr. C. says, for example, in another place, that if Dr. Miller could establish one of his statements alluded to, "he would make a difficulty which he would find it not easy to solve. For no presbyter, the pastor of a church, has a presbytery, or council of presbyters, *in his church*, who are his brothers and *colleagues*."†

Now, if Dr. C. or Dr. M. will look again into the usage of the Methodist Episcopal Church, they will find an easy solution of that difficulty also. The very thing alleged by Dr. C. as never existing, exists at this moment among us, in New-York, in Baltimore, in Charleston, in Cincinnati, and in many other places which might be named.

The next ancient Christian writer to whose testimony

* Page 26.

† Page 79.

reference is made in this controversy, is *Polycarp*.* Dr. C. indeed seems not to have found much in this father to his purpose, although he wrote after Ignatius, and consequently might be expected to speak still more strongly on the distinction of the three orders, if it then existed, since it is well known that after it once obtained footing it never retrograded, but steadily advanced till the completion of the entire hierarchal structure.

It is true, as I have before remarked, that Dr. C. claims the testimony of Polycarp as identical with that of Ignatius, in consequence of some general expressions of the former in regard to the epistles, and the personal worth of the latter. In answer to this, I have above said that all the arguments which go to disprove the genuineness, or at least the integrity, of the epistles ascribed to Ignatius, serve equally to render it at least entirely uncertain whether Polycarp ever saw them as we now have them, and especially those very passages on which Dr. C. mainly relies, which are especially suspicious, and consequently cannot be fairly made the ground of any certain argument. But, even supposing it otherwise: then, according to Dr. C.'s own showing, we have the additional testimony of Polycarp that *presbyters* stand in the place of the apostles. In proof of which I refer the reader to the quotations made above, from Dr. C.'s own edition of Ignatius's epistles. And this, I repeat, concedes all that we have the slightest inclination even to ask in the argument.

Dr. C. urges the fact that if the epistles of Ignatius "represent the presbyters as standing in the place of the apostles, they place the bishop as far above them as he could by any language be represented to be:" p. 20. What, then, will he say to the testimony of Polycarp, who, throughout his whole epistle to the Philippians,

* Dr. Miller places Polycarp in chronological order before Ignatius. Dr. Campbell, however, more correctly I think, remarks that the writings of Ignatius are supposed to have preceded those of Polycarp. Lectures, p. 73.

speaks of two orders only of ministers, viz., presbyters and deacons, never even naming that of bishop,—but, on the contrary, enjoining the people to be subject to their presbyters and deacons as to God and Christ. Could he, by any language, have represented any order higher than this? and had he known any order in the church then superior to that of the presbyters, to which they themselves owed subjection, could he, even decently, have adopted the highest possible similitude to illustrate the obedience due to *their* order? Nay, farther, when in the same epistle he lays down the duties and qualifications of deacons and presbyters, wherein every thing befitting judges and governors is included, and those of the people also throughout the epistle, is it not unaccountable that he should never even mention or allude to what was proper on the part of the higher order, or on the part of the presbyters, deacons, and people, toward such higher order, if he knew of any such then existing? Let common sense answer these questions.*

* A specimen of the facility with which Dr. C. begs a question, when he can find no more logical mode of settling it, is furnished in a remark which he makes respecting Polycarp, p. 84. He had just observed that Dr. Miller roundly admits, in the outset of his reference to this father, that Polycarp speaks of two orders of ministers; and then adds,—“and when we know that he himself belonged to a third.” Now does not Dr. C. “know” that this is the very point in debate? Yet nothing is more common than such dogmatizing throughout his book. Another similar instance just strikes my eye, near the same place, p. 85. He had just referred again to what is alleged from Ignatius, “in support of the three orders;” and then adds, “that we could not have any thing of an opposite character from Polycarp, *is evident from the circumstance of his being himself bishop of the church at Smyrna, with presbyters under him.*” *Is evident!* In what school of logic has such arguing been learned? If the simple fact that Polycarp was bishop, superintendent, overseer, or rector of the church at Smyrna, with presbyters under him, proves conclusively that he was therefore necessarily of a third order of ministers, by divine right, inherently and essentially distinct from and superior to the order of presbyters, then the controversy is ended. But surely it cannot be necessary to remind the reader, if it be to remind Dr. C., that this is still the precise point in dispute. The very same sophism is used by Dr. C. on the next page (86) in regard to Clement. I will only add here, that the whole of his effort, pp. 84, 85, to account consistently with his (Dr. C.’s) scheme, for Polycarp’s omission of

I cannot say, with Dr. C., that I think the representing of any order in the church as standing in the place of God, or the reverence and obedience due to it, by that which we owe to the Almighty, "most unexceptionable." For my own part, I humbly think such comparisons, whether in Ignatius or in Polycarp, very exceptionable. But then, if one early father thought proper to use them in reference to bishops, and another, his contemporary, who was also an apostolical father, and the disciple of an apostle, did so in like manner in reference to presbyters, is not the argument from their authority and language quite as good in the latter case as in the former?

In regard to the form of polity, however, the fact is, that the epistles of Ignatius and Polycarp, as we have them, cannot both, as Dr. Campbell remarks, be made applicable to the same state of the church.

The difference between them is not a diversity in style, but a repugnance in sentiment: so that we are forced to conclude that in the writings of one or the other there must have been something spurious or interpolated. "Now," continues the same able critic, "I have heard no argument used against the authenticity of Polycarp's letter equally cogent as some of the arguments employed against the authenticity of the epistles of Ignatius. And, indeed, the state of the church, in no subsequent period, can well account for such a forgery as the epistle of the former to the Philippians; whereas the ambition of the ecclesiastics, for which some of the following centuries were remarkable, renders it extremely easy to account for the nauseous repetition of

any mention whatever throughout his epistle, of any such superior third order, is totally overthrown by his using the highest similitude possible, as above stated, to illustrate the order of presbyters and the obedience due to them; a similitude, certainly, which he could not with any propriety, or even decency, have applied to this order, had he known any higher in the church.

obedience and subjection to the bishop, presbyters, and deacons, to be found in the letters of Ignatius.*

I may add here, that *Irenæus*, who is the next of the ancient fathers introduced, testifies of Polycarp, who, as *Irenæus* affirms, was taught by the apostles, and conversed with many of those who had seen our Lord, that "he always taught those things which he had learned from the apostles, which he likewise delivered to the church, and which are alone true." Book iii, chap. 3, *Against Heresies*. In the same paragraph he particularly mentions the "most excellent epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians, above cited, from which," he adds, "they who wish and have regard for their own salvation, can learn the character of his faith, and the doctrine of the truth."

Such then were Polycarp's views of church order, at least in the apostolical Philippian church, and such *Irenæus's* commendation of the "most excellent epistle" containing them.

The objection that Polycarp was himself a bishop, will be noticed hereafter. I now proceed to *Irenæus*.

At what precise time *Irenæus* wrote, authors are not agreed. Dr. Campbell says he is supposed to have written about the middle of the second century. Lord King places him about the year 184. And Dr. Miller says he is said to have suffered martyrdom about the year 202. For this even Dr. C. adopts the same date, p. 81. How long it was before his martyrdom that his work against heresies was written, does not appear. There is one passage in the third book, however, which strongly inclines me to adopt the latest of the dates assigned for him. It is that in which he mentions as a thing observable, that when he was a youth he himself had seen Polycarp; and states at the same time that Polycarp attained a very great age before his martyrdom. Now the date assigned for Polycarp's writings

* Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, p. 97.

by Lord King is the year 140, and it is probable that they were at least not much earlier; and if so, then that those of Irenæus did not appear till considerably after the middle of the second century, and probably not till toward the latter part of it. Now it is acknowledged that by that time a distinction between bishop and presbyters, as of different orders, began to prevail, although it was much less considerable than it became afterward. This fact, therefore, may reasonably be supposed to have influenced the style of Irenæus's writings, and accounts for the difference in this respect between him and Polycarp.

In regard to the character of Irenæus, and the weight due to his testimony, I wish not to detract from it. Yet, as in all other uninspired human compositions, so also in those of the ancient Christian writers in particular, due allowance must be made for the time and the circumstances in which they wrote, which had a pervading influence both on their turn of thought and their style of expression. And in regard to Irenæus himself, notwithstanding Mosheim's commendation of the "erudition" of his books against heresies, for that is the amount of it, another very eminent critic, himself an Episcopalian—I mean Archdeacon Jortin—says of that ancient father, "I fear it will be no very easy task to clear him entirely from the imputation of credulity and inaccuracy."*

Dr. C., moreover, seems to suppose, or leaves his readers to suppose, that Irenæus wrote in *Latin*; and hence he appends to his own work the third chapter of the third book of Irenæus against heresies in Latin, without stating that this not only was not the original, but that, even as a *translation*, it is pronounced by an able judge to be *excessively barbarous*.†

* Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, vol. i, p. 363.

† See Dr. Maclaine's note, Mosheim, vol. i, p. 177.

In introducing his quotations from Irenæus, Dr. C says, "The following is a translation of the third chapter of the third of those books Against Heresies—" * Would not readers generally infer from this, that he meant a translation from the original? Whereas, if he would not make an erroneous impression, he should have said,—The following is a translation of a translation: to which, on the authority of Dr. Maclaine, I add, and that an excessively barbarous one.

Dr. Miller makes a quotation from the fourth book of Irenæus, ch. xlv, which is rendered thus: "We ought therefore to adhere to *those presbyters who keep the apostles' doctrine*, and together with the *presbyterial succession*, do show forth sound speech. Such presbyters the church nourishes; and of such the prophet says, I will give them *princes* in peace, and *bishops in righteousness*." In his criticisms on this quotation, Dr. Cooke says, "The passage runs thus in Irenæus: 'Adhærere vero his qui,'" &c.† Would not readers generally most fairly and reasonably infer from this, that Dr. C. meant to convey the idea that these were the identical words of Irenæus himself? It may not be amiss then to inform such that this is altogether a mistake; Irenæus did not write in Latin at all, but in *Greek*: and that we have not even an opportunity to compare the barbarous Latin of his translator, in this part of the work, with the original; since the first book only of Irenæus is extant in the original Greek, the rest being preserved to us only in the barbarous Latin translation. Yet on this Dr. C. would build criticisms and inferences of such immense importance to the very being of the Christian church! I pray thee have us excused.

But I will take Dr. C. on his own criticism. The phrase "*cum presbyteri ordine*," from the Latin transla-

* Page 71.

† Page 76, note.

tion of Irenæus, is rendered in Dr. Miller's quotation, "with *the presbyterial succession*." Now, says Dr. C., "To bear this signification, there should be an adjective to agree with *ordine*, or the noun should be in the plural, *presbyterorum*. As it stands, it can only mean something belonging to a presbyter. We frequently meet with the expression *successiones episcoporum*, not *episcopi*: so, if this passage meant presbyterial succession, or a succession of presbyters, the word used would have been *presbyterorum*, not *presbyteri*."* Well, let us take, then, the following passage from the same Latin translation of Irenæus, and apply his own rule to it:—"Cum autem ad eam iterum traditionem quæ est ab apostolis quæ *per successiones presbyterorum* in ecclesiis custoditur, provocamus eos, qui adversantur traditioni, dicent se non solum presbyteris, sed etiam apostolis existentes sapientiores, synceram invenisse veritatem." Lib. iii, cap. 2. Here we have the precise phrase "*successiones presbyterorum*," which, according to Dr. C. himself, means *presbyterial succession*. Indeed, if "*successiones episcoporum*" means *episcopal succession*, as he contends, then "*successiones presbyterorum*," by his own rule, must mean *presbyterial succession*. He must inevitably admit both or give up both, or renounce all pretensions to candour in criticism.

Let it be especially noted here, also, that in the above cited passage from Irenæus, not only are the *successions of presbyters* mentioned as the channel through which the apostolic tradition [whether of doctrine or order] had been preserved in the churches, but no notice whatever is taken of any superior order; an omission, which, had there been any such of the distinct supreme rank which Dr. C. alleges for bishops, would, to say the least, have been extremely unbecoming, and would argue very little in favour of the accuracy of the author.

Granting then that the phrase "*successiones episcoporum*" is also to be met with,—what does this prove? It proves precisely what we believe to be the true and candid view of the subject: that is to say, that even down to the time of Irenæus, and to the end of that century, either no difference of order was considered as existing between presbyters and bishops, or the difference was regarded as so small and unessential, that these titles were frequently interchanged by the writers of those times. In fact, as Dr. Campbell affirms, and as the above passage plainly shows, Irenæus talks in much the same style of both. What at one time he ascribes to bishops, at another he ascribes to presbyters. He speaks of each as entitled to obedience from the people, as succeeding the apostles in the ministry, and as *the succession* through which the apostolic doctrine and tradition had been handed down.

That the names bishop and presbyter are often interchanged by Irenæus, as well as other writers of his time, even to the end of the century, is admitted by the learned *Bishop Pearson*, who, however, maintains that this happened only when they spoke of the ministry in general terms, or mentioned those ministers only who had preceded them; affirming that, in regard to their own contemporaries, the offices of individuals are never thus confounded. Dr. Campbell admits the truth of this remark, and considers it a very strong confirmation of the doctrine here defended. For what reasonable account can be given of this manner (otherwise chargeable with the most unpardonable inaccuracy) but by saying that in the time of the predecessors of Irenæus there was no material distinction of order between bishops and presbyters; whereas in his own time the distinction began to be marked by peculiar powers and prerogatives. If this had not been the case, it was as little natural as excusable to be less accurate in speaking of those that went before, than of those in his

own time. Was it ever observed of writers in the fourth and fifth centuries, to come no lower, that they in this manner confounded the different ecclesiastical offices of the third? Is Cyprian, for instance, in any succeeding age, styled a presbyter of Carthage, or Rogatian the bishop? Are not their respective titles as uniformly observed in after ages as in their own?*

In regard to the passage above mentioned, as cited by Dr. Miller from Irenæus, book iv, chap. xlv., on which Dr. C. founds his criticism respecting the presbyterial succession, which I have just discussed, he subsequently adds as follows: "For the whole amount of it, as it stands, is, To such presbyters (as with the discipline of a presbyter show forth sound speech, &c.) I will give *princes* in peace, and *bishops* in righteousness. Certainly" [continues Dr. C.] "it would not appear from this form of expression that the presbyter was the bishop."†

Whether this observation be solid or merely specious may be tested by an allusion to the same place of the prophet, by another *more ancient* and more immediately *apostolical father*,—I mean Clement, whose testimony I have before adduced. This father, in his epistle to the Corinthians, before mentioned, states, chap. xlii, that "the apostles, having preached the gospel in countries and towns, constituted the first-fruits of their ministry, whom they approved by the Spirit, bishops and deacons of those who should believe." And to show that he did not use these words vaguely, but as expressive of the distinct orders established by the apostles in the churches, he adds, "Nor was this a new device, inasmuch as bishops and deacons had been pointed out many ages before; for thus says the Scripture, 'I will constitute their bishops in righteousness and their dea-

* Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, pp. 100, 101.

† Pages 76, 77.

cons in faith.' " * The passage alluded to is Isaiah lx, 17. Whether Clement's translation or application of it be correct is not now in question. It is enough for our present purpose that it shows clearly, not only what his opinion but what his knowledge was of the orders of ministers constituted by the apostles in the churches which they planted; for to do this was his express design. Those whom in this passage he calls bishops, in other parts of the same epistle he calls presbyters, demonstrating thereby that he uses the two terms interchangeably, as expressive of one and the same order. And most indisputably he speaks of but *two* orders in the apostolical churches, constituted by the apostles themselves; at the same time that his express object was to state the ministerial orders in the churches thus constituted. If, then, we interpret Irenæus by Clement, a more ancient father, and the fellow-labourer of St. Paul himself, we must say, in contradiction of Dr. C., that it would appear from his form of expression,—Clement being interpreter,—both that the bishop was a presbyter, and that a presbyter was the bishop; in a word, that the ministerial degrees in the apostolical churches consisted of *two orders* only, whether called bishops and deacons, or presbyters and deacons. Keeping this in view, as placed in this clear light by the venerable Clement, there remains no difficulty whatever, on the principles of the Methodist Episcopal polity, in any part of the whole third chapter of the third book of Irenæus, or in any other quotation from that father, even as given in the translation of a translation, furnished by Dr. C.

Dr. C. himself thus sums up his own view of the strongest points, extracted from Irenæus.

“ 1. That the apostles appointed bishops in all the

* So the passage from Clement is rendered in Campbell's Lectures, p. 70.

churches, and left them as their successors TO GOVERN THE CHURCH.

2. That the episcopate or bishopric was delivered to one person, and one bishop only *at a time*, is ever mentioned as governing the church: thus the apostles delivered the episcopate to Linus, *to govern the church* at Rome; Anacletus *succeeded* him, and *after him*, in the third place, Clement obtained the episcopate; and the names of twelve *successive* bishops are given, who governed that church, each in his day; as indicated by the expressions, *under Clement, under Anicetus*.

3. It is expressly stated that there were successions of bishops *in all the churches*, and that with the church at Rome, in which the names of twelve successive bishops are given, every church should agree, that is, *those which were in all respects faithful*.

4. That Polycarp was taught by the apostles, and was *by them appointed bishop of Smyrna*.*

Again: "Irenæus says," [continues Dr. C.] "True knowledge is the doctrine of the apostles, &c. *according to the successions of the bishops, to whom they (viz., the apostles) delivered that church which is in every place,*" &c.†

And again: "In the twentieth chapter of the fifth book, speaking of those who derive their authority from the apostles, in comparison with heretics, he says, 'For they are all far behind *the bishops to whom the apostles delivered the churches*, and this we have with all carefulness made apparent in the third book.'"[†]

Now in all the above, there is nothing whatever in the slightest manner incompatible with the inherent identity of the order of bishops and presbyters, as the existing polity and usage of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which give to the bishops official superiority among their fellow-presbyters and in the government of the churches, especially illustrate. This any intel-

ligent and candid person who will take the pains to look into them may readily perceive and perfectly understand. For it has been proved from Clement, as above, that those whom the apostles constituted bishops in the churches which they planted, and whom they left their successors, delivering to them their own place of government, were of that order of ministers next above deacons, whom Clement sometimes calls bishops and at other times presbyters, and that no other intervening order whatever is mentioned or alluded to throughout his whole epistle. If Irenæus therefore does not contradict Clement, we must so understand him also; and if he does contradict him, then Clement is the better authority of the two.

But that Irenæus does in fact agree with Clement, there seems to me very plain and positive proof. In his fourth book, chap. xliii, he speaks of "those presbyters in the church who have the succession, as he had shown, from the apostles; who, *with the succession of the episcopate*, received the gift of truth, according to the good pleasure of the Father." This passage Dr. C. does not dispute; but makes the following very just comment on it: "That Irenæus was here speaking of bishops is concluded from the word 'episcopate,' and from the reference to what he had said before."* Very true. This is exactly our own opinion. And hence it follows incontestably, according to this authority, that the true succession from the apostles, and "the succession of the episcopate" itself, is with presbyters, one of them at a time, within his charge, whether less or more, being vested with official superiority in the government of his fellow-ministers and the churches, and yet being intrinsically and inherently but a presbyter among presbyters,—though occupying the first seat and the first official degree, both in dignity and

* Page 77.

authority ; as the speaker of the House of Commons, in Great Britain, who, nevertheless, is still inherently but a commoner among commoners.

Dr. C. himself, indeed, is compelled to admit "that Irenæus sometimes uses the word presbyter in speaking of those who govern the churches ; *qui præsumt ecclesiis*. There are three other passages in which he does the same." *

Afterward, it is true, he makes an effort to neutralize this admission, on the principle that the apostles were sometimes 'called elders ; and of the saying of Hilary, "The bishop is the chief,—though every bishop is a presbyter, yet every presbyter is not a bishop." Very true. This again is exactly our own opinion. And it proves, according to Hilary also, that though *every* presbyter is not a bishop, yet that *some* presbyters *are* bishops ; for this is evidently the drift of the saying. Nor is this in the slightest measure contradicted by what Irenæus says in other places "of the church [of Rome, for example] being governed by the bishop, BY ONE BISHOP AT A TIME ;" or of those whose names he mentions in succession, "who *singly* governed the church, *each in his day*." On the plan of the Methodist Episcopal polity, presbyters do govern the churches "in the sense in which the word *præsumt* is used." And whether the term be applied to our bishops as general superintendents, or even to presiding elders within their districts, or to our ordinary presbyters in charge of circuits or stations in which there may be "many thousands of Christians and numerous presbyters," still it may be strictly said of them, "*qui præsumt ecclesiis*,"—who preside in or over the churches.

The "most explicit passage on this subject," in the letter of Irenæus to Victor, bishop of Rome, admits of exactly the same solution. And on a careful review of

what has been said, I now repeat the assertion of Dr. Campbell, and what he states has been admitted by Bishop Pearson, that the names bishop and presbyter are often interchanged by Irenæus; to which I add, that this interchangeable use of them, as essentially the same order, alone reconciles him both to himself and to that still more venerable ancient, *Clemens Romanus*, who being among the first bishops of Rome itself, the very pattern and model of all other churches, according to Irenæus and Dr. C., certainly understood the true apostolical order.

There remains one other "most explicit" passage, adduced by Dr. Miller from the letter of Irenæus to Victor, bishop of Rome, which I do not perceive that Dr. C. has noticed. It is as follows:—"Those *presbyters* before *Soter*, who *governed* the church, which thou *Victor*, now *governest*, [the church of Rome,] I mean *Anicetus*, *Pius*, *Huyginus*, *Telesphorus*, and *Sixtus*, they did not observe it: [he is speaking of the day of keeping *Easter*.:] and those *presbyters* who *preceded* you, though they did not observe it themselves, yet sent the eucharist to those of other churches who did observe it. And when blessed *Polycarp*, in the days of *Anicetus*, came to *Rome*, he did not much persuade *Anicetus* to observe it, as he (*Anicetus*) declared that the custom of the *presbyters* who were his *predecessors* should be retained." *

In this decisive passage, those who had "*singly* governed the church [of Rome] *each in his day*," and "in succession," before the time of Victor, who was contemporary with Irenæus, probably between the middle and close of the second century, are uniformly styled *presbyters*. This seems to me a very strong confirmation of the remark of Dr. Campbell, on the admission of Bishop Pearson above quoted, viz., that

* Miller's Letters, pp. 152, 153.

Irenæus, and other Christian writers of that century, used the names bishop and presbyter interchangeably, in reference to those who had preceded them, because the distinction of these church officers as two orders, although it began, perhaps, to be somewhat prevalent toward the middle of that century, yet had not, even to its close, become by any means so settled as it afterward did ; and hence the great difference observable in this respect between the style of the Christian writers of the fourth and fifth centuries, for example, to come no lower, and those of the second.

It cannot be necessary to repeat, in answer to Dr. C., what has so often been said, and is so perfectly obvious to the plainest understanding, that the attributing of superiority in government and official elevation to the individual presbyter constituted bishop, does not in the slightest degree invalidate the remark above made, or the argument founded on it. This is essential to our own hypothesis, and is exemplified both in fact and in language in our own ecclesiastical polity, now before the eyes of the whole community.

Before I introduce a quotation from another Christian father of the second century, I mean *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who flourished about the close of the century, I must remind the reader that confirmation, as well as ordination, is deemed by high churchmen as one of the peculiar acts of a bishop. Dr. Miller had quoted *Clemens Alexandrinus* as saying, in reference to the impropriety of women wearing false hair,—“On whom or what will the *presbyter* impose his hand? To whom or what will he give his blessing? Not to the woman who is adorned, but to strange locks of hair, and through them to another head.” He had then remarked, that it is extremely doubtful whether Clement here alludes to confirmation at all, and that, if he does, it is the first hint in all antiquity of this rite being practised ; and it is especially unfortunate for the high church cause

that Clement ascribes its performance to *presbyters*. Dr. C., however, admits it as a case of confirmation, and says, p. 87, "Here a presbyter confirms, which being (Dr. Miller argues) the office of a bishop, it is evident that bishops and presbyters are one. To this [continues Dr. C.] it is replied, that in Egypt it was the custom, *when the bishop was absent*, for the presbyters to confirm. '*Apud Ægyptum presbyteri confirmant, si præsens non sit episcopus.*' This very exception [Dr. Cook still continues] proves the rule, that it was the bishop's special duty. It was only when he was absent that the presbyters confirmed; and moreover, the statement that *in Egypt* this was the custom, implies that it was not the common practice of the church." In the greater part of this passage Dr. C. speaks sensibly and pertinently, and concedes, I think, every thing that we need in the argument. Let it be especially noted that he does not deny that confirmation, as well as ordination, is one of the peculiar acts of a bishop. And then he admits that when the bishop was absent the presbyter confirmed, although it was the bishop's special duty when present. The latter I grant very freely. But if in his absence the presbyter might perform acts otherwise peculiar to him, then this proves that presbyters possess an inherent capacity for the legitimate performance of such acts,—although in churches episcopally constituted, they are, for the sake of order and harmony, restrained by the custom or law of the church from the performance of such acts where there is a bishop. And this is all we ask. As to the remaining observation of Dr. C. that "the statement that *in Egypt* this was the custom, implies that it was not the common practice of the church,"—I do not think that this is a necessary consequence. It may be, that Clement, being himself an Egyptian, meant to be understood as speaking of what was within his own knowledge, without intending to affirm or deny any thing as to the practice

in other countries. Analagous phrases, moreover, on other subjects, will show at once that Dr. C.'s inference is not a necessary one from the premises. If it be said, for example, that in America there are persons of all conditions, and a great diversity of soils and climates,—does it by any means follow that the speaker must necessarily be understood as affirming that this is not the case in any other quarter of the world? Clearly not. No more, I think, is Dr. C.'s inference a necessary one from the observation of Clement.

But be it, for argument's sake, that Clement so intended. Still it is thus proved by his testimony, that *in Egypt* at least, at that early period, this was deemed a legitimate practice: and let it not be forgotten, that besides the many other churches in Egypt, there was that of Alexandria especially, one of the most famous of all the ancient churches, the seat of Christian letters and science, and, next after Rome, the greatest city in the ancient world. That there may have been a diversity in some of the usages, and in the polity, in important respects, among the primitive churches even of apostolical plantation, seems highly probable, as well from this instance, according to Dr. C.'s own view of it, as from other considerations. And this, too, is in perfect accordance with our principles.

There is one decisive witness, however, whose testimony as to the general usage, even down to a much later period, wholly overthrows Dr. C.'s inference from the above passage of Clement. The witness to whom I allude is *Jerome*, one of the most eminent Christian writers about the close of the fourth century and the beginning of the fifth. I shall hereafter have occasion for a much more particular reference to this father. At present, I merely wish to adduce that well-known passage in his famous letter to Evagrius:—"Quid enim facit, excepta ordinatione, episcopus, quod presbyter non faciat?" "For what does a bishop which a presbyter

may not do, excepting ordination?" In regard to ordination, the consideration of this passage will be resumed in another place. At present I confine myself to the point in hand, viz., confirmation. Does not Jerome expressly affirm in the above passage,—for the question is but a mode of strongly affirming,—that even in his time a bishop did nothing which a presbyter might not do, except ordaining? Nor does he affirm this as an "exception,"—as a thing limited to any particular place,—but as a well-known general fact, which would not then be disputed. Yet, plain as this is, and although Dr. C. himself, after Bowden, quotes this very passage in the English, to prove from Jerome that presbyters had not the right of ordaining, so obstinately is he bent on carrying his point, that in the very next paragraph, p. 107, he undertakes to draw an inference from another passage in the same Jerome, also taken from Bowden, that bishops had the *exclusive* right of *confirmation* also! In other words, Jerome first says explicitly and positively, in the interrogatory form of affirmation, that a presbyter might do any thing a bishop did, except ordination; and Dr. C. himself quotes and urges this; yet in the next breath draws an inference from a vague and ambiguous passage, that Jerome's testimony is, that confirmation is the exclusive prerogative of a bishop, as well as ordination, and that presbyters could perform neither! What may not be forced from a witness if tortured in this way?

Just as easy would it be, on this plan of managing testimony, to reconcile Tertullian, whom he next introduces, with what he alleges from Ignatius. The latter asserts, according to Dr. C., that where there is not a bishop, priest, and deacon, in his sense, "*there is no church.*" And Tertullian affirms that where there was none of the clerical order, even laymen both celebrated the eucharist and baptized, and served as priests to themselves: for that *three persons, though laymen, make a church.*

“Ubi ecclesiastici ordinis non est consessus, et offers, et tinguis, et sacerdos es tibi solus. Sed ubi tres, ecclesia est, licet laici.”*

After the above extract, I should suppose that nothing more, certainly, can be necessary to demonstrate that Tertullian at least was not of the sect of high church. But Dr. C. asserts, p. 91, that Tertullian and Irenæus “agree entirely.” How then does he reconcile this with a former assertion that Irenæus agrees with what he alleges from Ignatius? For in regard to the essential constituents of a church, Tertullian and the alleged Ignatius are as diametrically at points as opposites can possibly be; and things agreeing with one and the same thing ought to agree with each other.

There is another passage of Tertullian in the following words: “Superest ad concludendam materiolum de observatione quoque dandi et accipiendi baptismum commonefacere. Dandi quidem habet jus summus sacerdos, qui est episcopus. Dehinc presbyteri et diaconi; non tamen sine episcopi auctoritate propter ecclesiæ honorem. Quo salvo, salva pax est. Alioquin etiam laicis jus est.”† In English thus:—“It remains that I remind you of the custom of giving and receiving baptism. The right of giving it belongs to the highest priest, who is the bishop. Then to the presbyters and deacons, yet not without the bishop’s authority, *for the sake of the honour of the church*. This being secured, peace is secured. *Otherwise* even the laity have the right.” Does this also “entirely agree” with what Dr. C. alleges from Ignatius, as to what is essential to the very being of a church by divine institution?

It is proper to apprise the reader that Tertullian is not a writer upon whose speculations we should repose implicit confidence; although as to matters of fact and

* Exhortatio ad Castitatem. Tertullian was the first of the Latin fathers, about the beginning of the third century.

† De Bap. cap. xvii.

custom he may be regarded as an ordinarily credible witness. The ill usage he received from the ecclesiastics of Rome is supposed to have contributed to make him a Montanist, and thus, as Dr. Jortin remarks, he lost the title of *saint*. The same author adds, that though learned for his time he was deficient in judgment, and fell into many errors. Yet, in citing him, as I have done above, I have only to say, that if he be good authority for our opponents, then surely it cannot be unfair to turn their own artillery against themselves. *Tertullian's* opinion then was that the priesthood itself is not of divine original, since by the gospel law all Christians are priests, and that, consequently, the distinction between the priesthood and laity is of the church's making :—" *propter ecclesiæ honorem.—Alioquin etiam laicis jus est.*" So Dr. Campbell understood him, and so do I ; and it is submitted to the learned reader whether this be not the obvious drift of Tertullian's argument, and the true meaning of the passage cited by Dr. C. Does Dr. C. affirm that in this also Tertullian and Irenæus " entirely agree," and does he himself adopt the sentiment ?*

* The mantle of charity which that ingenious and learned critic Dr. Jortin casts over the learned African father now under review, with all his defects, may well be commended to the consideration of ecclesiastical controvertists and critics, in moderation of that *odium theologicum* which too often disfigures and disgraces their productions ; at the same time that the cause of truth itself is wounded through the intemperate zeal of overheated friends. After mentioning Tertullian's losing, that is, failing to receive, the title of *saint*, from the cause above stated,—a title, he adds, which hath been often as wretchedly bestowed as other titles and favours,—he thus continues :—

" Charity bids us suppose that he lost not what is infinitely more important. Several have thought too hardly concerning him ; never considering, that, with all his abilities, he was deficient in judgment, and had a partial disorder in his understanding, which excuses almost as much as downright phrensy. He was learned for those times, acute and ingenious, and somewhat satirical, hasty, credulous, impetuous, rigid and censorious, fanatical and enthusiastical, and a bad writer as to style, not perhaps through incapacity of doing better, but through a false taste and a perverse affectation. He fell into many errors : but it is to be hoped that in another world the

But if Dr. C. means merely, as is possible, that Tertullian and Irenæus entirely agree as to the succession of the early bishops of Rome, then let us examine this point. Turning back to the translation of a translation of the third chapter of Irenæus's third book against heresies, as furnished by Dr. C., pages 71, 72, I find it there stated, as the *tradition* of the Church of Rome, that that church was founded "by the two most glorious apostles Peter and Paul;" whereas Tertullian, in his account of the tradition of the same church, omits the name of Paul, and says that it "tells of Clement ordained by *Peter*."

Again: Irenæus says, "The blessed apostles [not Peter alone] delivered the bishopric to *Linus*. "Tertullian says the tradition was that *Peter* delivered it to *Clément*.*

Again: Irenæus says, that it was after both *Linus* and *Anacletus*; that "*in the third place* from the apostles Clement obtained the bishopric."† Whereas Tertullian says he was ordained directly by *Peter*. Is this what Dr. C. asserts to be an entire agreement? It strikes me, on the contrary, as widely differing in every particular.

Now that I am on this point of the *successions* of the bishops of Rome, it may not be amiss to trace it a little farther. And here, I am sure, the reader cannot but be more forcibly struck with the inexplicable confusion and the irreconcilable contradiction which reign at the very head of the line; especially when he considers what stress is laid on this thing by the high-church sect, and that after all it is a mere matter of tradition, and of a tradition so ill at agreement even with itself. If such

mistakes as well as the doubts of poor mortals are rectified, and forgiven too, and that whosoever loves truth and virtue,

————— illic postquam se lumine vero
Implevit, stellasque vagas miratus et astra
Fixa polo, vidit quanta sub nocte jaceret
Nostra dies."

Remarks on Ecclesias. Hist. vol. i. p. 353.

* Dr. C., page 91.

† Page 72.

be the true state of the case with regard to the very fountain spring, what possible certainty can there be in its ramified streams? And is this a foundation for such a superstructure as high church would rear upon it?

At the very outset of an attempt to trace this matter farther, the fact presents itself, not only that Tertullian does not agree with Irenæus, but that he does not agree even with himself. "His list," says Dr. C.,* "is as follows: Linus, Cletus, Anacletus, Clemens, Evaristus, &c." Now, but a little before, p. 91, Dr. C. had himself adduced a passage from a different work of Tertullian's, in which it was stated that the tradition was that Clement was ordained to the bishopric by Peter; whereas in this list he stands in the *fourth* place in the succession. Irenæus, as has been shown, assigns him the *third* place. Epiphanius, again, differs from Irenæus by making *Cletus* the *second*, instead of Anacletus; and from Tertullian by omitting *Anacletus* altogether; and still farther, he differs from them all, by giving two Evaristuses in the line—which Dr. C. will have it, is merely mentioning Evaristus's name twice. Nay, Dr. C. himself, in attempting to harmonize Tertullian's conflicting statements, only makes a bad matter still worse: for he shows that he contradicts the assertion and the cherished tradition of the church in Rome itself. There, on the spot, the church of the Romans asserted that Clement was ordained the first bishop by Peter. "On the contrary, [says Dr. C.,] he [Tertullian] says expressly, 'Hac cathedra, Petrus qua sederat ipse, locatum maxima Roma Linum, *primum* considerare jussit.' 'In this chair, in which Peter himself had sat, he commanded Linus, settled in Great Rome, *first* to sit.'"†

Here is not only confusion itself confounded, but

* Page 97.

† Page 99. [There are memoranda here indicating that the author intended to add more.—Ed.]

palpable and irreconcilable contradiction, amidst which, being wholly at a loss which to believe, the only safe alternative seems to be to reject them all ; and especially, as it is altogether uncertain, in fact, whether even Peter himself ever was in Rome.*

Dr. C. indeed has certainly a very fertile imagination ; and conjectures (in which he quotes Cave as supporting him) that the difference between Irenæus and Epiphanius consists merely in *misspelling* names,—the one writing Cletus and the other Anacletus, but both intending only one and the same person. We prefer, however, to take the history as it stands, without the emendation of either Dr. C. or Cave. For as both Irenæus and Epiphanius were men of “erudition,” it is to be presumed that they knew how to spell names of such distinction and notoriety, or to copy “a list,” which Dr. Cooke takes upon himself to affirm “was kept in each

* The whole of the traditionary statements (for they are nothing better) imputed to Irenæus and other ancient fathers, respecting the foundation of that “greatest, most ancient, and universally known church” of Rome, “by the two most glorious apostles Peter and Paul,” have very much the air of the fabrications of a later period. For it is certain, in the first place, that the church of Rome was not the “most ancient,” if “the greatest,” and in the second place, that Paul was not its founder, as is manifest from his own epistle to that church. The following observations, from Dr. Adam Clarke’s preface to his notes on that epistle, place this matter in a clear light :—

“When, or by *whom* the gospel was first preached at Rome cannot be ascertained. Those who assert that St. *Peter* was its founder, can produce no solid reason for the support of their opinion. Had this apostle first preached the gospel in that city, it is not likely that such an event would have been unnoticed in the *Acts of the Apostles*, where the labours of St. Peter are particularly detailed with those of St. Paul, which indeed form the chief subject of this book. Nor is it likely that the author of this epistle should have made no reference to this circumstance, had it been true. Those who say that this church was founded by these two apostles conjointly have still less reason on their side ; for it is evident from chap. i. 8, &c., that St. Paul had *never been at Rome*, previously to his writing this epistle. It is most likely that no *apostle* was employed in this important work ; and that the gospel was first preached there by some of those persons who were converted at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost ; for we find from Acts ii, 10, that there were then at Jerusalem *strangers of Rome, Jews, and proselytes* ; and these, on their return, would naturally declare the wonders they had witnessed ; and proclaim that truth by which they themselves had received salvation.”

church ;” and that in a matter of such importance they used diligence and care. And if they did not, then their histories are entitled to the less credit.

In coming down to the time of *Cyprian*, a favourite authority with high-church writers, I have no hesitation to grant, not only that by that time the polity of the Christian churches generally was “episcopal,” in the proper sense of this term, as indeed I believe it always was, but that Cyprian and other Christian writers of that age used a style clearly expressive of three official distinctions in the ministry, whether denominated orders, degrees, or by whatever other name they may be called. I am free to admit, also, that down to that time, about the middle of the third century, the powers and prerogatives of the bishops had been steadily advancing, and those of the presbyters gradually depressed, so that even at that period, the style and state of bishops, as compared with other presbyters, presented an aspect very different from that which had been exhibited either in the apostolical age, or in that which immediately succeeded the death of the last of the inspired college. At that period, moreover, and increasingly so thereafter, there are plain indications that presbyters were not only restricted from the actual performance of what was deemed the peculiarly sacred function of ordination, at least without the bishop’s permission, (and in churches episcopally constituted very properly so,) but that it became very unusual for the bishop to grant this permission ; and, as Dr. Campbell has well remarked, the transition from *seldom* to *never* is very natural ; and just as natural, in our ways of judging, from what is never done to what cannot lawfully be done.

The true question, however, and the only true question, at this stage of the controversy, still remains, and is wholly unaffected by any of the above admissions. It is not whether presbyters actually did ordain at the period in question, either alone or in conjunction with a

bishop as his colleague,—but whether it was even then generally judged and admitted that there either is anything essential in the character of the ministry itself, or of universal and perpetual obligation in its divine institution, which makes it unlawful, invalid, and null for presbyters to perform this function in churches which have no bishops in fact, or with the permission or by the direction of the bishop in those which have, and where there are no laws, usages, or order of such churches to the contrary. On *this* question there is not wanting testimony in support of our views, even in Cyprian, as much as he was disposed to exalt the episcopal prerogative, and to bring in an unlimited multitude of popes, while he manfully resisted the arrogant assumptions of one, as above shown.

Dr. Miller, in reference to the sentiments of Cyprian, had said that he not only repeatedly calls the presbyters of Carthage his *colleagues*, but that in writing to them when he was himself in exile, he requests them, during his absence, to perform *his duties* as well as *their own*; which seems plainly to imply that he considered them inherently capable in his absence, and by his permission or request, to perform whatever was deemed peculiar to the office of the bishop when present, as well as their own ordinary functions. Dr. C. answers that Cyprian's words are not quoted; and that, supplying the defect from Hooker, what Cyprian exhorted and commanded his presbyters to do was, "to supply his room in doing those things which *the exercise of religion requires*."* I ask then, whether the following, from Cyprian's fifth epistle, be not the place to which Dr. Miller alludes:—"Quoniam mihi interesse nunc non permittit loci conditio, peto vos pro fide et religione vestra, *fungamini illic et vestris partibus et meis*, ut nihil vel ad disciplinam vel ad diligentiam desit."

Will not Dr. C. undertake to affirm that, to supply his (Cyprian's) room "in doing those things which *the exercise of religion requires*," is "an exact translation" of "*fungamini illic et vestris partibus et meis?*" On the contrary, I appeal to every reader in the least acquainted with the Latin tongue, whether it be not an explicit entreaty to them to perform, in the exigence of his necessary absence, the functions peculiar to his office when present, as well as those ordinarily their own? And had he intended any limitation, and especially if he meant to except the chief function of all—ordination, would he not have said so, or have given some intimation of it? Instead of this, he gives them but one simple general rule for their guidance, as long as it might be necessary for him to continue absent, and that was to perform the duties of his office as well as their own. And I submit it, moreover, to the unmystified understanding of every reader, whether, if a vacancy had actually occurred, either in the diaconship or the eldership of that church during Cyprian's absence, (which would have made it the more especially desirable that it should be filled,) the above request would not have been a sufficient warrant, so far as Cyprian's sanction was concerned, to authorize the presbytery to proceed to supply such vacancy by an actual ordination.

This view of the subject is greatly strengthened by the following passage, in a letter to Cyprian from Firmilian bishop of Cæsarea, one of his contemporaries:—"Quando omnis potestas et gratia in ecclesia constituta sit, ubi præsident majores natu, qui et baptizandi et manum imponendi, et ordinandi possident potestatem."* That is, "Since all power and grace is established in the church, where elders preside, who have the power both of baptizing and imposing hands, and *ordaining*." On the original Latin of this passage, as above, the fol-

* Cyprian's Epis., p. 75.

lowing remarks of Dr. Campbell are so clear and satisfactory that I add them entire.

“That by *majores natu*, in Latin, is meant the same with *πρεσβυτεροι* in Greek, of which it is indeed a literal version, can scarcely be thought questionable. Besides, the phrase so exactly coincides with that of Tertulian, who says, ‘*Probatī præsident seniores*,’—approved elders preside,—as to make the application, if possible, still clearer. Indeed, if we were not to consider the Latin, *majores natu*, as meant to correspond to the Greek *πρεσβυτεροι*, the only translation we could give to the phrase used by Firmilian would be, ‘where old men preside;’ an affirmation which could hardly ever have been in such general terms given with truth. For when the canonical age of bishops came to be established, it was no more than thirty; and it is a certain fact that, both before and after that canon, several were ordained younger. I am far from thinking that under this term, ‘*majores natu*,’ those who were then peculiarly called bishops are not included, or even principally intended: but what I maintain is, that, now that the distinction had obtained, the use of so comprehensive a term seems sufficiently to show that it was not his intention to affirm it of the latter order, exclusively of the former, else he would never have employed a word which, when used strictly, was appropriated to the former order and not to the latter.—Thus the name *priests*, in English, in the plural number, is often adopted to denote the clergy in general, both bishops and priests. But no intelligent person that understands the language, and does not intend to deceive, would express himself in this manner—‘In the Church of England the priests have the power of baptizing, confirming, and ordaining.’ Nor could he excuse himself by pretending that in regard to the two last articles, he meant by the word priests the bishops, exclusively of those more commonly, and for distinction’s

sake, called priests. Yet the two cases are exactly parallel; for in Firmilian's time the distinction of the three orders was, though not so considerable, as well known by the Christians in Cappadocia and in Africa, as they are at this day in England."*

These just and forcible observations are also a full answer to a remark which Dr. C. makes, p. 96, on Dr. Miller's reference to the above passage, and which is so frequently repeated throughout his book, viz., "that some writers occasionally used the general term presbyter, or priest, in speaking of the bishop." That they sometimes used the general term presbyters, or priests, *inclusively* of the bishop or bishops, is granted. But after that the distinction of three orders became general, as was the case in Firmilian's time, no sensible writer would choose this comprehensive term in describing the functions peculiar to bishops, as contradistinguished from, and exclusively of, presbyters, to whom, strictly, this designation is appropriate. On this point Dr. Campbell's illustration seems to me perfectly conclusive. "The name *priests*, in English, in the plural number, is often adopted to denote the clergy in general, both bishops and priests. But no intelligent person, that understands the language, and does not intend to deceive, would express himself in this manner—'In the Church of England the priests have the power of baptizing, confirming, and ordaining.' Nor could he excuse himself by pretending that in regard to the last two articles, he meant by the word priests the bishops, exclusively of those more commonly, and for distinction's sake, called priests." In regard to the parallel passage of Tertullian, quoted by Dr. Campbell as illustrative of the *maiores natu* of Firmilian, Dr. C. thinks that the phrase, "Præsident probati quique seniores," means "that certain approved *old men* presided;" and then

* Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, pp. 114, 115.

adds, "and this term is so general that it certainly does not indicate presbyters particularly."* If by "particularly," Dr. C. means *exclusively*, it is granted. But does this general term *exclude presbyters*? Does it indicate bishops in Dr. C.'s sense of bishops, and bishops only? This is the true question, and common sense, with common honesty, may answer it.

In addition to what Dr. Campbell says as to the rendering of the phrase "old men," that it imputes to the writer an affirmation which could hardly ever, in such general terms, have been made with truth,—I may cite a passage from one of the letters of Ignatius, as furnished by Dr. C. himself: "Wherefore it will become you also not to use your bishop too familiarly, *upon the account of his youth*; not considering his age, which indeed to appearance is *young*." Epist. to the Magnesians. So also Paul to Timothy, "Let no man despise thy *youth*."

As to the observation which Dr. C. somewhere makes, that the period anciently denominated "youth" extended to a considerable age, it is wholly irrelevant; because, in the first place, the writers of those times would not call *old men* those whom their language and custom classed among the young; and in the second, the very charges given both by Ignatius and St. Paul show that Timothy and the Magnesian bishop were young in fact, and therefore liable to be treated too familiarly, if their elevated character and conduct did not protect them against it.

But of all the extraordinary things in Dr. C.'s book, his representations of the views of *Jerome* surprise me most. Whether he has exhibited them justly and truly, the reader shall have an opportunity to judge.

I had before occasion to remark, incidentally, that Jerome was a Christian writer of the latter part of the fourth century. "A man," says Dr. Campbell, "who

had more erudition than any other person then in the church, the greatest linguist, the greatest critic, the greatest antiquary of them all." This will probably not be disputed; and consequently the reader may well suppose that he was capable of expressing himself intelligibly on a subject which he professedly took in hand to treat. Now let it be carefully observed, that the question here, for the present, is not whether Jerome's views were right or wrong, but *what were they*; and has Dr. C. correctly and fairly represented them? In the days of Jerome, then, it seems that some deacon had taken upon him to assert that the order of deacons was superior to that of presbyters. To come at his error, and at the same time to chastise his arrogance, Jerome, in his epistle to Evagrius, says:—"I hear that a certain person has broken out into such folly, that he prefers *deacons* before *presbyters*, that is, before *bishops*; for when the apostle clearly teaches that *presbyters* and *bishops* were the *same*, who can endure it that a *minister of tables and of widows* should proudly exalt himself above those at whose prayers the body and blood of Christ is made? Do you seek for authority? Hear that testimony,—*Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.* Would you have another example? In the Acts of the Apostles *Paul* speaks thus to the priests of one church: *Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops, that you govern the church which he hath purchased with his own blood.* And lest any one should contend about there being a plurality of bishops in one church, hear also another testimony, by which it may most manifestly be proved that a bishop and presbyter are the same. *For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain presbyters in every city, as I have appointed thee. If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, &c. For a*

bishop must be blameless as steward of God. And to Timothy, Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. And Peter, also, in his first epistle saith, The presbyters which are among you I exhort, who am also a presbyter, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed; to rule the flock of Christ, and to inspect it, not of constraint, but willingly, according to God; which is more significantly expressed in the Greek Επισκοπουντες, that is, superintending it, whence the name of bishop is drawn. Do the testimonies of such men seem small to thee? Let the evangelical trumpet sound, the son of thunder, whom Jesus loved much, who drank the streams of doctrine from our Saviour's breast. The presbyter to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth. And in another epistle, The presbyter to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. But that one was afterward chosen, who should be set above the rest, was done as a remedy against schism; lest every one drawing the church of Christ to himself, should break it in pieces. For at Alexandria, from Mark the evangelist, to Heracles and Dionysius, the bishops thereof, the presbyters always named one, chosen from among them, and placed in a higher degree, bishop. As if an army should make an emperor; or the deacons should choose one of themselves, whom they knew to be most diligent, and call him archdeacon." Miller's Letters, pp. 184, 185.

Again: in his commentary on St. Paul's epistle to Titus, the same very eminent father says:—

"Let us diligently attend to the words of the apostle, saying, *That thou mayest ordain elders in every city, as I have appointed thee.* Who, discoursing in what follows what sort of presbyter is to be ordained, saith, *If any one be blameless, the husband of one wife, &c.,* afterward adds, *For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God, &c.* A presbyter, therefore, is the same as a bishop; and

before there were, by the devil's instinct, parties in religion, and it was said among the people, *I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas*, the churches were governed by the common council of presbyters. But *afterward*, when every one thought that those whom he baptized were rather his than Christ's, it was determined through the whole world that one of the presbyters should be set above the rest, to whom all care of the church should belong, that the seeds of schism might be taken away. If any suppose that it is merely *our* opinion, and not that of the Scriptures, that bishop and presbyter are the same, and that one is the name of *age*, the other of *office*, let him read the words of the apostle to the *Philippians*, saying, *Paul and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi; with the bishops and deacons. Philippi is a city of Macedonia*, and certainly in one city there could not be more than one bishop, as they are *now* styled. But at that time they called the same men *bishops* whom they called *presbyters*, therefore he speaks indifferently of bishops as of presbyters. This may seem even yet doubtful to some, till it be proved by another testimony. It is written in the Acts of the Apostles, that when the apostle *came to Miletus, he sent to Ephesus, and called the presbyters of that church*, to whom, among other things, he said, *Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock over whom the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood*. Here observe diligently, that calling together the presbyters of one city, *Ephesus*, he afterward styles the same persons *bishops*. If any will receive that epistle which is written in the name of *Paul* to the *Hebrews*, there also the care of the church is divided among many, since he writes to the people, *Obeys them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, as those that must give an account, that they may do it with joy and not with*

grief, for that is unprofitable for you. And Peter (so called from the firmness of his faith) in his epistle saith, The presbyters which are among you I exhort, who am also a presbyter, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed, Feed the flock of God which is among you, not by constraint, but willingly. These things I have written to show that among the ancients presbyters and bishops were the same. But, by little and little, that all the seeds of dissension might be plucked up, the whole care was devolved on one. As, therefore, the presbyters know that by the custom of the church they are subject to him who is their president, so let bishops know that they are above presbyters more by the custom of the church than by the true dispensation of Christ; and that they ought to rule the church in common, imitating Moses, who, when he might alone rule the people of Israel, chose seventy with whom he might judge the people." Miller's Letters, pp. 180-183.

After carefully perusing the above passages, without reference to any purposes of party or system, can any intelligent and candid reader doubt that Jerome intended (in vindication of the true primitive order of presbyters as divinely instituted, and in correction of the assuming deacon whose presumption was the occasion of the first passage) to assert,

1. That in the apostolical age, and by the Divine institution, bishops and presbyters were one and the same order: and that what he had written then was expressly to show that "among the ancients" this was the case.

2. That it was as a remedy against schisms, after that age, viz.: when every one thought that those whom he baptized were rather his than Christ's, that it was determined through the whole world, that one of the presbyters should be set above the rest, to whom subsequently, and fully so by Jerome's time, the title *bishop* came to be distinctively appropriated.

3. That the above change in the government of the churches took place, not all at once, but *gradually*, (*paulatim*,) *by little and little*. How long it was before it became general or universal not being stated.

4. That the true footing of the acquired superiority of bishops above presbyters was, that *by the custom of the church*, rather than by the *true dispensation of Christ*, they had, *by little and little*, been elevated to the *official* superiority of *presidents*, or presiding presbyters, to whom the rest, with their free consent, as seems plainly implied, and for the sake of order and harmony, had become subjected. In other words, that this state of things gradually took the place of the original primitive order, and was of the church's making, though for expedient and salutary purposes, and not of Divine institution, or by divine right.

5. That the presidency or official superiority of bishops, which thus gradually took place in the church, was no other than such as the body of presbyters themselves could and did confer. In proof of which, and in evidence that this actual practice had not wholly ceased until a comparatively late period, he adduces the noted instance of the famous church at Alexandria, as above recited.

This summary of Jerome's sentiments, which I beg the reader to compare with the passages above quoted, makes him consistent with himself, and with the express object of his letter to Evagrius, which was to show that presbyters, so far from being inferior to deacons, as some vain deacon had weakly or proudly asserted, were primarily of the same order with *bishops*. A contrary interpretation, on the other hand, makes his argument incoherent, inconsistent, and subversive of his avowed design.

Dr. Miller remarks that it might be a matter of surprise to learn that some episcopal writers had ventured to say that Jerome merely *conjectured* that in the apos-

tle's days bishops and presbyters were the same. What surprise may not justly be excited, to learn that *Dr. C.* has the controversial hardihood roundly to affirm, and to endeavour to make his readers believe, "that *this passage from Jerome, taken as it is offered*, [that is, as I understand, taken as quoted by Dr. Miller, and above from him,] *plainly declares that episcopacy* [of course in the high-church sense asserted by Dr. C.] was established through the whole world by a decree . . . in the time of Paul and the other apostles, and consequently *was done by them*, and is therefore a Divine institution." In other words, as he had said a little before, that it was done "by all the apostles; originated with these inspired servants of God; and is therefore a Divine institution, and absolutely binding on all the church." All which, whether directly, or by just and fair inference, Dr. C. asserts he has shown "that this passage from Jerome, taken as it is offered, *plainly declares.*"*

That I do not misunderstand Dr. C. seems entirely clear from the various forms and places in which, in substance, he repeats this assertion, and especially from a sentence toward the conclusion of his discussion of this subject, in which he says,—"*It is evident from the preceding examination of the passages from Jerome, quoted by Dr. Miller, that he [Jerome] fully supports the doctrine that episcopacy* [of course in Dr. C.'s sense] *was established by the apostles.*"† On which ground, as the very footing on which Jerome "plainly" places the matter, Dr. C. had asserted before that it is "therefore a Divine institution, and absolutely binding on all the church!"

As the reader may possibly be curious to know by what occult power of the magical art Dr. C., through some twenty large pages, elaborates this extraordinary conclusion, and puts this perfect fool's-cap on Jerome,

* Pages 102, 103.

† Page 117.

I will endeavour, if I can, to make an abstract of it,—interspersing, by the way, some occasional observations on the process.

The grand fulcrum on which the whole lever of his argument rests, is the observation which Jerome makes in his commentary on Titus, in which, after saying, “a presbyter, therefore, is the same as a bishop,” he adds, “and before there were, by the devil’s instinct, parties in religion, and it was said among the people *I am of Paul, I of Apollos, and I of Cephas*, the churches were governed by the common council of presbyters. But *afterward*, when every one thought that those whom he baptized were rather his than Christ’s, it was determined through the whole world, that one of the presbyters should be set above the rest, to whom all care of the church should belong, that the seeds of schism might be taken away.”

Now, says Dr. C., “the date of the circumstance mentioned by Jerome as having produced the change he speaks of, is easily determined. This circumstance is mentioned in Paul’s first epistle to the Corinthians, (i, 12.)—” He then goes into a detail to show the date of that epistle, and concludes thus: “This was therefore done by the apostles themselves; and because done by inspired men, it is a divine institution.”* The same thing, grounded on the same assumption, he reiterates over and over, throughout the twenty pages.

There are three [four] considerations, however, which totally overthrow this main pillar of Dr. C.’s whole argument.

1. The first is, as suggested by Dr. Miller, that some of the portions of the New Testament from which Jerome adduces proof that bishops and presbyters were originally the same, were certainly written *after* the first epistle to the Corinthians. From which it is manifest

that Jerome could not, without palpably contradicting himself, have intended to say that it was just at that time, when that first epistle to the Corinthians was written, that the change took place of which he speaks, and that it was then done by the decree of "all the apostles" themselves, for all the churches "through the whole world."

2. Dr. C.'s arguments involve anachronisms which convict them of palpable error. In a former part of his work he undertook "to show from the Scripture," that it was in the state of anxiety for the welfare of the Ephesian church, in which Paul left Ephesus to go into Macedonia, as related in the twentieth chapter of Acts, that he committed to Timothy the episcopal charge of that church; that his first epistle to Timothy, containing "full evidence of ample episcopal authority,"—that is, of the ample episcopal authority committed to Timothy by Paul,—“was written in *Macedonia*, after Paul went there from Greece, and *before* he rejoined Timothy and the rest of his company at Troas.”*

Now if the reader will take the trouble to look at the twentieth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, he will see indisputable proof that all this was *before* Paul came to *Miletus*; and thence sent for the elders of Ephesus to meet him there. If he will look at page 101 of Dr. C.'s book, he will also find that Paul's placing Timothy over the Ephesian church at that period, is alleged by Dr. C. as one of the instances of the change made in pursuance of the apostolical decree, on the occasion mentioned in first Corinthians. And yet it is on Paul's address to the elders of Ephesus at *Miletus*, *subsequently* to Timothy's being made bishop of Ephesus, according to Dr. C., that Jerome founds one of his principal arguments for the primitive identity of bishops and presbyters! Is it possible, then, that *Jerome's* views and *Dr. C.'s* could be the same?

3. Dr. C. alleges also that Paul "set Titus over the Cretans" "in like manner, and with similar [episcopal] powers:" that is, as he had set Timothy over the Ephesians. "And other apostles [Dr. C. adds] did the same in other places."* And these episcopal appointments of Timothy and Titus by Paul, with others similar by other apostles in other places, he affirms were the very changes to which Jerome alludes, made "by the apostles themselves," at the time mentioned in first Corinthians i, 12, and yet it was on Paul's epistle to Titus *after* he was placed in Crete, that Jerome founds his argument that bishops and presbyters were the same in the apostolical institutions and language at the time when that epistle was written!

4. The last consideration I shall mention is, that Dr. C.'s interpretation puts on Jerome a perfect fool's-cap. Because his express object was to show that as *presbyters* know that it is *by the custom of the church* that they are subject to him who is their *president*, so *bishops* ought to know that they are above presbyters, more *by the custom of the church* than *by the true dispensation of Christ*. The very reverse of which Dr. C.'s construction forces upon him.

The only rational construction, therefore, which it would seem, in fairness to Jerome, can be put upon his language is, that his reference to the passage in first Corinthians is by way of *allusion* merely, in the same manner as we still describe such parties in churches as addict themselves to favourite ministerial leaders, by representing them as saying, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas."

There was one consequence which Dr. C. found his construction involved in, which, one would think, should have convinced him that he had misinterpreted Jerome. This distinguished father expressly says, that before

there were by the devil's instinct such parties in religion as he speaks of, "the churches were governed by the common council of presbyters." No, says Dr. C., "he is certainly wrong in saying that; even before the divisions at Corinth the church was governed by a common council of presbyters, except in subordination to the authority of the apostles."* Certainly, Dr. C.; if Jerome had said so it would have been "certainly wrong;" and he certainly was sufficiently acquainted with the New Testament to know this, and would never have risked his reputation on so silly an assertion. But he never said so, and the manifest absurdity of it proves that he never meant so; but that his allusion was to a period subsequent to the apostolical age, when the churches no longer enjoyed the superintendence of inspired guides and rulers; and when *ministers* also—not the *people* merely, as in Corinth—began to form parties for themselves rather than to make disciples of Christ. Dr. C. might, therefore, have well spared himself the long chain of argumentation by which he *gravely* labours to disprove the imputed sentiment of Jerome. The passages quoted from that very learned father do not express it, and there is the amplest reason to believe that he never entertained it.

But Dr. C. thinks that he finds a flaw in Dr. Miller's *translation* of *one word* in the quotations from Jerome, which he conceives calculated to support the idea "that a long time elapsed before bishops were set over the churches." The word objected to in the translation is "*afterward*." That this word necessarily implies "a long time" after, I cannot perceive. However, Dr. C. states that the word used by Jerome, according to Jeremy Taylor, is *postquam*; on which he then takes the occasion to furnish a critical disquisition of considerable length to prove that *postquam* does not mean *afterward*,

but *after that*, literally, *after which*, referring to the time when a thing was done, "as [he continues] in this very case from Jerome." That is to say, Dr. C. here affirms that according to the true critical import of this word *postquam*, Jerome meant to be understood that "*before* that time [viz., that precise period spoken of by Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians] the common council of presbyters governed the church; *after* that, the bishops."* And yet it has been shown above that it was specially to apostolical epistles written *after* that time that Jerome refers, in proof that presbyters and bishops were still the same.

But says Dr. C., "*postea* is the word Jerome would have used if he had meant what Dr. Miller attributes to him."† Well, although I have not Jerome's original work at hand to examine, as it seems neither had Dr. C., yet, as he takes his extract from Jeremy Taylor, I will take mine from Dr. Campbell. Now Dr. Campbell extracts a passage from Jerome, which, if not taken from the same place as that quoted by Taylor, was evidently written by Jerome in reference to precisely the same subject and occasion. In that passage, according to Dr. Campbell's extract, *postea* is the word used by Jerome, and consequently, by Dr. C.'s own admission, means "what Dr. Miller attributes to him." The whole sentence, as quoted by Dr. Campbell, stands thus:—"Quod autem *postea* [Jerome had been speaking immediately before, says Dr. Campbell, of the times of the apostles] unus electus est, qui cæteris præponeretur, in schismatis remedium factum est, ne unusquisque ad se trahens, Christi ecclesiam rumperet."‡

* Page 115.

† Ibid.

‡ Lect. on Eccl. Hist. p. 118. ["But that one was *afterward* elected to be set over the rest was for the prevention of schism, that individuals might not sever the church of Christ by drawing off parties to themselves." The distinction between *postquam* and *postea* is too obvious to justify Dr. C.'s parade of learning in his very unnecessary attack on Dr. Miller's translation. *Postquam* is a conjunction; *postea* an adverb. They may both

By Dr. C.'s own concession, then, this point is settled beyond farther controversy. In another part of the process under review, Dr. C. asserts that "*the express statement of Jerome*, in the passage quoted by Dr. Miller, [as above given] establishes" the following particulars:—

1. That the *bishops* of the primitive church were a *distinct order* of clergy from those *presbyters* who were authorized to preach and administer sacraments, and superior to them."
2. "That each bishop had under him a number of congregations, with their pastors, whom he governed."
3. "That this kind of episcopacy was considered by *the whole* primitive church as an institution of Jesus Christ."

† (Dr. C.'s numbering of the above particulars is 1, 3, and 5.)

Now the reader will please observe, that the question here for the present is not whether this was the actual state of things in the primitive church,—that is, in the apostolical age, as is obviously meant,—but whether, in the passage quoted from Jerome by Dr. Miller, and copied above, it is "*the express statement of Jerome*," that it was so, and was so considered "*by the whole primitive church*." This is Dr. C.'s unqualified asseveration. But although I have read over the passage in question again and again, and as carefully as I am able, if any one can find in it any such "express statement of Jerome" as Dr. C. avers it to contain, I must confess that his ocular as well as his mental vision must be strangely different from mine.

Assuming then that the first and second of the above particulars (Dr. C.'s first and third) are established "by the express statement of Jerome," his next step in the process is to affirm that another "flows from them," viz., "that these bishops were exclusively invested with

mean *after that*, but in different senses, as the English reader will perceive by an example.—"*After that* [*postquam*] presbyters ceased to rule the church, bishops governed it." "Presbyters first governed the church, *after that*, [*postea*,] bishops."—Ed.]

the right of ordaining." To this the answer simply is, that Jerome's express statement establishes no such thing as Dr. C. affirms it does in the second particular above mentioned; and consequently, that this farther one said to "flow from" the others is equally imaginary. Its foundation being taken away it falls itself, of course.

In confirmation of his inference, however, Dr. C. repeats a passage quoted by Dr. Bowden from Jerome, as follows: "For what does a bishop which a presbyter may not do, excepting ordination." And then adds,— "This passage shows plainly that the presbyters had not the power of ordaining, but that this belonged exclusively to the bishop."* It shows plainly that this was the case in Jerome's time, about the close of the fourth century, I grant; but it shows nothing more. Indeed the whole drift of his argument, and the language he uses, both demonstrate that this was what he meant. He had been expressly proving that no distinction originally existed between bishops and presbyters; that they were one and the same order; and that in the church of Alexandria, even down to a comparatively late period, presbyters had constituted their own bishop whenever a vacancy occurred, as the army in the days of imperial Rome made an emperor, or the deacons formerly an archdeacon.† He then comes down to his own

* Page 107.

† With this case before him is it not surprising that Dr. C. should make the assertion he does, pp. 140, 141, that up [down?] to the time of Eusebius in the fourth century, there is no case of ordination by presbyters, as he believes, "even alleged" by the opponents of the high-church scheme? In contradiction of this, I need only cite that very eminent critic, Dr. Campbell, whose works are common in this country as well as in Europe, who, in reference to this very case, thus expresses himself:—"I know it has been said that this relates only to the election of the bishop of Alexandria, and not to his ordination. To me it is manifest that it relates to both; or, to express myself with greater precision, it was the intention of that father [Jerome] to signify that no other ordination than this election, and those ceremonies with which the presbyters might please to accompany it, such as the instalment and salutation, was then and there thought necessary to

time, using the *present tense* of the verb, not the past,—
 “Quid enim *facit*, excepta ordinatione, episcopus, quod presbyter not *faciat*.” “What does a bishop?” &c. As if he had said, “Even now, what power does a bishop exercise which a presbyter may not exercise, except the

one who had been ordained a presbyter before; that, according to the usage of that church, this form was all that was requisite to constitute one of the presbyters their bishop.” Lect. on Eccles. Hist., p. 117. Here then is alleged a *series of instances*, before the time of Eusebius, in one of the most renowned churches of antiquity, of the ordination in form or in fact even of *bishops* by *presbyters*. Yet Dr. C., with his characteristic boldness of assertion, affirms in another place, page 146, that “before the fourth century such a thing [as ordination by presbyters] does not appear to have been thought of!”

But long before Dr. Campbell the same thing was alleged, in terms, if possible, still more explicit, by that most reverend, very learned primate of Ireland, *Archbishop Usher*. In his letter to Dr. Bernard, that eminent Episcopalian says,—“I have ever declared my opinion to be that *episcopus et presbyter, gradu tantum differunt non ordine*, [that *bishop* and *presbyter* differ in *degree* only, not in *order*,] and consequently, that in places where bishops cannot be had, the ordination by presbyters stands valid.” And in his answer to Baxter the same distinguished prelate says, “that the king [Charles I.] having asked him at the Isle of Wight, whether he found in antiquity that *presbyters alone ordained any*? he replied Yes, and that he could show his majesty more,—*even where presbyters alone successively ordained bishops*: and instanced in Hierom’s [Jerome’s] words, (*Epist. ad Evagrium*) of the presbyters of Alexandria *choosing and making* their own bishops, from the days of Mark till Heraclas and Dionysius.” This then was alleged by that very learned episcopal antiquary, not only as a case of ordination by presbyters before the time of Eusebius, but of the *successive ordinations* of *bishops* by presbyters for about two hundred years. It shows, moreover, that *he* understood Jerome exactly in the sense here averred. And it ought not to be forgotten, that, in addition to his pre-eminent qualifications as a critic and antiquary, he was himself an *archbishop*.*

The *Smectymnian* divines, in the same age with Usher, alleged various proofs of presbyters ordaining, evidently within the period alluded to by Dr. C.† *Smectymnuus* was a fictitious name composed of the initial letters of the names of *Stephen Marshal, Edward Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstow*.

The Rev. Ezekiel Cooper, an eminent and venerable minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, alleged the same in his Funeral Discourse on the late Bishop Asbury.‡ It was also alleged in the work entitled “A Defence of our Fathers, and of the original Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church.”

* Dr. C. takes upon him to say, p. 180, that there is no author produced in support of the latter statement, above mentioned, in reference to Archbishop Usher, and yet, in the note to Neal’s History of the Puritans, the authority for it is distinctly stated. Neal’s History of the Puritans, Am. Ed. vol. ii, pp. 412, 413, note, and the reference there to Baxter’s Life, p. 206.

† Ibid. p. 412.

‡ Appendix, pp. 218, 219.

single one of ordaining?" And even this superiority, in the single item of ordaining, according to the tenor of Jerome's whole argument, was "*by the custom of the church,*" (*consuetudine ecclesiæ,*) rather than by "*the true dispensation of Christ :*" that is, of the Church's making, and not of Divine institution. It may not be amiss to observe, that even among the papal doctors and theologues in the famous council of Trent, the sentiment last named was precisely the construction put on the language of Jerome ; and it was added that St. Austin, (Augustine,) another very eminent father of that age, and himself a very distinguished bishop, was of the same opinion. Some disputed in the council that "the degree of a bishop was an *order* ; and others that aboue priesthood there was nothing but *iurisdiction*—and some beeing of a middle opinion, that is, that it is an *eminent dignitie*, or *office* in the *order*. The famous saying of St. *Hierom*, [Jerome,] and the authority of St. *Austin*, [Augustine] were alleaged, who say that the degree of a bishop hath been most ancient, but yet an ecclesiasticall constitution."*

But what is yet most amazing, if any thing in Dr. C. can any longer amaze, after himself quoting a plain explicit passage in Jerome in proof that a presbyter could do every thing that a bishop did, with *one single exception*,—that of ordination,—in the very next paragraph he says, "It is shown by another passage from Jerome, 'that there was also *another* thing that a bishop did which a presbyter could not do, viz., *confirmation* : thus in the same breath making Jerome affirm and deny the same proposition. Is it not more probable that Dr. C. misinterprets Jerome in the place last alluded to, and from which he draws his inference, (for it is but an inference,) than that that eminent father thus palpably contradicts himself? One would suppose that the obscure passage should rather be interpreted by the plain one.

* Paul Sarpis' Hist. of the Coun. of Trent, p. 591.

Another conclusion at which Dr. C. arrives, in the logical process under review, is, that “in Jerome’s estimation *apostles and bishops were the same*.”*

Now it has been most unequivocally proved above, that “in Jerome’s estimation,” in the apostles’ days, *bishops* and *presbyters* were the same: and as things equal to one and the same thing must necessarily be equal to each other, it follows most conclusively that “in Jerome’s estimation” *apostles* and *presbyters* were the same. If Dr. C. rejects this consequence, I still submit it to the reader.

All that Dr. C. says in regard to the Alexandrian ordinations by presbyters,—even of bishops by presbyters,—will be so completely, and I must think conclusively answered in an extract on that subject from an eminent critic, which I shall presently submit to the reader, that I judge it preferable to waive any remarks of my own in regard to it, when others so vastly better than any I am capable of are furnished to my hand.

I may just observe, by the way, that I have become so familiarized in Dr. C.’s style with such phrases as the following—“it is impossible that they could have been ordained by presbyters,”—“neither can it be believed,”—“could not possibly have passed unnoticed,” &c., &c., that they no longer occasion me any alarm. And it has particularly occurred to me that, *possibly*, there may be a wider range in *possibility* than Dr. C. has well considered.

He adds as a final remark, too, that “Blondel admits that episcopacy was established in Alexandria above a century before this.”† We admit more, viz., that it was episcopal all the while,—its *bishops* being both chosen and ordained, in fact if not in form, by its presbyters, as shall presently be more fully shown.

But says Dr. C., “It must not be forgotten that Dr.

Miller in this attempt to prove that the second ordination was performed by presbyters, has been driven *to admit a second ordination*—"a second ordination to what?" he exclaims. His own reply is, "To a superior order, necessarily. Certainly [he continues] not to an inferior station,—surely not to the same he then occupied, necessarily, therefore, to a superior."* Now mark: Dr. C.'s assertion here is, that such a second ordination by *presbyters*, as Dr. Miller had contended was the practice in the Alexandrian church, supposing it to have actually taken place, *necessarily constituted a superior order*. Be it so; for we will not dispute about the word "order." Whether it be called order, degree, or office, it matters not to us: the *thing* is what we look at: and Dr. C. has here furnished us, out of his own mouth, a complete answer to the main objection which has ever been urged by Dr. C. and his party against the episcopacy of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which rests precisely on this basis. I wish to add nothing to what Dr. C. concedes in this passage for the complete vindication of our episcopal organization, except, in the words of Jerome, that it is *by the custom of the church,—an ecclesiastical constitution*,—and not pretended to be by *divine right*, nor of essential or universal obligation.

The extract that I promised above in support of the views I have taken of the ordinations in the apostolical church of Alexandria for two hundred years or more, and of the true testimony of Jerome, in farther answer to Dr. C.'s remarks on these subjects, I now subjoin. It is from the pen of Dr. Campbell.

"The testimony which I shall bring from him [Jerome, says this able critic] regards the practice that had long subsisted at Alexandria. I shall give you the passage in his own words, from his epistle to Evagrius. 'Alexandriæ a Marco evangelista usque ad Heraclam et Dio-

nysium episcopos, presbyteri semper unum ex se electum, in excelsiori gradu collocatum, episcopum nominabant: quomodo si exercitus imperatorem faciat: aut diaconi eligant de se quem industrium noverint, et archidiaconum vocent.' I know it has been said that this relates only to the election of the bishop of Alexandria, and not to his ordination. To me it is manifest that it relates to both; or, to express myself with greater precision, it was the intention of that father to signify that no other ordination than this election,—and those ceremonies with which the presbyters might please to accompany it, such as the instalment and salutation,—was then and there thought necessary to one who had been ordained a presbyter before; that according to the usage of that church this form was all that was requisite to constitute one of the presbyters their bishop. But as I am sensible that unsupported assertions are entitled to no regard on either side, I shall assign my reasons from the author's own words, and then leave every one to judge for himself. Jerome, in the preceding part of this letter, had been maintaining in opposition to some deacon who had foolishly boasted of the order of deacons as being superior to the order of presbyters,—Jerome, I say, had been maintaining that in the original and apostolical constitution of the church, bishop and presbyter were but two names for the same office. That ye may be satisfied that what he says implies no less, I shall give it you in his own words—'Audio quendam in tantam erupisse vecordiam, ut diaconos presbyteris, id est episcopis, anteferret. Nam cum apostolus perspicue doceat eosdem esse presbyteros quos episcopos, quid patitur mensarum et viduarum minister, ut supra eos se tumidus efferat.' For this purpose he had in a cursory manner pointed out some of those arguments from the New Testament which I took occasion in a former discourse to illustrate. In regard to the introduction of the episcopal order as then commonly

understood, in contradistinction to that of presbyter, he signifies that it did not exist from the beginning, but was merely an expedient devised after the times of the apostles, in order the more effectually to preserve unity in every church, as in case of differences among the pastors it would be of importance to have one acknowledged superior in whose determination they were bound to acquiesce. His words are, '*Quod autem postea,*'—he had been speaking immediately before of the times of the apostles,—'*unus electus est, qui cæteris præponeretur, in schismatis remedium factum est, ne unus quisque ad se trahens, Christi ecclesiam rumperet.*' Then follows the passage quoted above concerning the church of Alexandria. Nothing can be plainer than that he is giving an account of the first introduction of the episcopate, (as the word was then understood,) which he had been maintaining was not a different order from that of presbyter, but merely a certain pre-eminence conferred by election for the expedient purpose of preventing schism. And in confirmation of what he had advanced that this election was all that at first was requisite, he tells the story of the manner that had long been practised and held sufficient for constituting a bishop in the metropolis of Egypt. It is accordingly introduced thus, '*Nam et Alexandriæ,*' as a case entirely apposite: to wit, an instance of a church in which a simple election had continued to be accounted sufficient for a longer time than in other churches,—an instance which had remained a vestige and evidence of the once universal practice. Now if he meant only to tell us, as some would have it, that there the election of the bishop was in the presbyters, there was no occasion to recur to Alexandria for an example, or to a former period; as that continued still to be a very common, if not the general practice throughout the church. And though it be allowed to have been still the custom in most places to get also the concurrence or consent of

the people, this shows more strongly how frivolous the argument from their being electors would have been in favour of presbyters as equal in point of order to bishops, and consequently superior to deacons; since in regard to most places as much as this could be said concerning those who are inferior to deacons,—the very meanest of the people, who had all a suffrage in the election of their bishop. But, understood in the way I have explained it, the argument has both sense and strength in it, and is in effect as follows:—There can be no essential difference between the order of bishop and that of presbyter, since to make a bishop nothing more was necessary at first (and of this practice the church of Alexandria remained long an example) than the nomination of his fellow-presbyters; and no ceremony of consecration was required but what was performed by them, and consisted chiefly in placing him in a higher seat and saluting him bishop.

“Add to this, that the very examples this father makes use of for illustration, show manifestly that his meaning must have been as I have represented it. His first instance is the election of an emperor by the army, which he calls expressly making an emperor. And is it not a matter of public notoriety that the emperors raised in this manner did, from that moment, without waiting any other inauguration, assume the imperial titles and exercise the imperial power? And did they not treat all as rebels who opposed them? If possible, the other example is still more decisive. To constitute an archdeacon, in the sense in which the word was then used, no other form of investiture was necessary but his election, which was in Jerome’s time solely in his fellow-deacons; though this also, with many other things, came afterward into the hands of the bishop. By this example, he also very plainly acquaints us, that the bishop originally stood in the same relation to the presbyters, in which the archdeacon, in his own time, did to the other

deacons: and was, by consequence, no other than what the archpresbyter came to be afterward, the first among the presbyters. But does not Jerome, after all, admit in the very next sentence the superiority of bishops in the exclusive privilege of ordaining? True: he admits it as a distinction that then actually obtained; but the whole preceding part of his letter was written to evince that from the beginning it was not so. From ancient times he descends to times then modern, and from distant countries he comes to his own; concluding that still there was but one article of moment whereby their powers were discriminated. ‘*Quid enim facit, excepta ordinatione, episcopus, quod presbyter non faciat?*’—This indeed proves sufficiently that at that time presbyters were not allowed to ordain. But it can prove nothing more; for in regard to his sentiments about the rise of this difference, it was impossible to be more explicit than he had been through the whole epistle. I shall only add, that for my part I cannot conceive another interpretation that can give either weight to his argument or consistency to his words. The interpretation I have given does both, and that without any violence to the expression. I might plead Jerome’s opinion in this case—I do plead only his testimony. I say I might plead his opinion as the opinion of one who lived in an age when the investigation of the origin of any ecclesiastical order or custom must have been incomparably easier than it can be to us at this distance of time. I might plead his opinion as the opinion of a man who had more erudition than any person then in the church—the greatest linguist, the greatest critic, the greatest antiquary of them all. But I am no friend to an implicit deference to human authority in matters of opinion. Let his sentiments be no farther regarded than the reasons by which they are supported are found to be good. I do plead only his testimony, as a testimony in relation to a matter of fact both recent and noto-

rious ; since it regarded the then late uniform practice of the church of Alexandria,—a city which, before Constantinople became the seat of empire, was, next to Rome, the most eminent in the Christian world.

“To the same purpose the testimony of the Alexandrian patriarch Eutychius has been pleaded, who, in his annals of that church, takes notice of the same practice, but with greater particularity of circumstances than had been done by Jerome. Eutychius tells us that the number of presbyters therein was always twelve ; and that on occasion of a vacancy in the episcopal chair, they chose one of themselves, whom the remaining eleven ordained bishop by imposition of hands and benediction. In these points it is evident there is nothing that can be said to contradict the testimony of Jerome. All that can be affirmed is, that the one mentions particulars about which the other had been silent. But it will be said, there is one circumstance,—the duration assigned to this custom,—wherein there seems to be a real contradiction. Jerome brings it no farther down than Heracla and Dionysius, whereas Eutychius represents it as continuing to the time of Alexander, about fifty years later. Now it is not impossible that a circumstantiated custom might have been in part abolished at one time, and in part at another. But admit that in this point the two testimonies are contradictory, that will by no means invalidate their credibility as to those points on which they are agreed. The difference, on the contrary—as it is an evidence that the last did not copy from the first, and that they are therefore two witnesses, and not one—serves rather as a confirmation of the truth of those articles wherein they concur. And this is our ordinary method of judging in all matters depending on human testimony. That Jerome, who probably spoke from memory, though certain as to the main point, might be somewhat doubtful as to the precise time of the abolition of the custom, is rendered even probable by his

mentioning, with a view to mark the expiration of the practice, two successive bishops rather than one. For if he had known certainly that it ended with Heracla, there would have been no occasion to mention Dionysius; and if he had been assured of its continuance to the time of Dionysius, there would have been no propriety in mentioning Heracla.”* But says Dr. C., “What the ancient church thought of ordination by presbyters may be gathered from the following statements. In the fourth century”—dear sir, be pleased to stop; if by “the ancient church” you mean the church in the fourth century, when Constantine, “that truly most excellent and admirable emperor,” as, after Wolfgang, you are pleased to call him, had poured in upon the ecclesiastics a flood of wealth and dignities, and the whole hierarchal corps of patriarchs, exarchs, metropolitans, archbishops, bishops, country bishops, archpriests, priests, archdeacons, deacons, acolyths, exorcists, and doorkeepers became organized. Indeed the foundations of the supremacy of the prince of hierarchs, the pope himself, had become in that age pretty securely established, not indeed by the characteristics which should distinguish a Christian bishop, but by the dazzling magnificence and splendour of his see, which *in that century* had become an object of such ambition as to be the occasion of the most barbarous and furious civil war between the contending factions of the rival candidates for the episcopal throne. Apostolical mother of churches!—“the greatest, most ancient, and universally known,”—with which “*on account of thy greater pre-eminence*, it is necessary that every church should agree!” This was thy character *in the fourth century*, and spread the baleful influence of thy conspicuous example throughout Christendom; and yet it is from acts of the church in that age as “the ancient church”

* Lect. on Ecclesiastical History, pp. 117–121.

that Dr. C. brings authorities to settle the question between the rights of presbyters and bishops!—an age in which there were not wanting bishops so insufferably inflated with the arrogant conceit of their lofty pre-eminence, as scarcely to deign to see mortals, or speak to their fellow-servants!

But says Dr. C., “The councils of ‘the ancient church’ in the fourth century, condemned ordinations by presbyters as null, because not performed by them who were bishops verily and indeed.”* And how were those councils composed? Dr. C. tells us himself, page 140, “The *presbyters* had no seat in councils as principals, but might sit *as representatives of their bishop*,” that is, when the bishop himself could not be present; as in the case alleged of the bishop of Rome, who, “being unable through age to attend the Council of Nice, was represented by his presbyters.”† So that it was by one of the very parties in the question exclusively,—the prelates themselves who composed the councils in those days, by the favour of the emperors who convened them,—that the decisions were made against the presbyters, who were denied a seat except in some instances, as representatives of absent bishops, and of course as subject to their instructions. Were these councils of the *apostolical* pattern? or are the rights of presbyters to be absolutely concluded by *their ex parte* sentence? Yet the very council whose sentence Dr. C. alleges as decisive authority in this question,—the Council of Constantinople,—was exclusively thus composed of *one of the parties in the controversy*!

Nay, Dr. C. descends even to the councils of the *fifth* century, and alleges the authority of their decrees to the same effect:‡—a century, early in which (as a specimen of the manner in which things were carried *even*

* Page 146.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

in general councils, in those degenerate days of episcopal arrogance and domination) the lawless, haughty, and imperious Bishop Cyril presided in an œcumenical council, the transactions of which are branded by the learned Mosheim “as full of low artifice, contrary to all the rules of justice, and even destitute of the least air of common decency.”* And that this was not a mere exception, a singular instance of unbridled lawlessness and violence in the episcopal councils of that age, appears on the authority of the same eminent historian; who states, that in another general council, held before the middle of that century, in which Bishop Dioscorus, the successor of Cyril, and the faithful imitator of his arrogance and fury, presided, matters were carried on with the same want of equity and decency that had dishonoured and characterized the proceedings of the one just above named, under the presidency of his predecessor. And if the reader can credit it on the authority of the best historians, such was the infamous brutality of this fifth century council, that even a bishop against whom the lordly and dominant Dioscorus had a pique, was *publicly scourged in the most barbarous manner*, BY THE ORDER OF THE COUNCIL, and died soon after of the bruises inflicted on him in that assembly of *jure divino* [by divine right] *successors of the apostles*!

After such a relation it can be no matter of wonder that a synod in which such atrocities were perpetrated, came afterward to be denominated “*συνόδον ληστρικὸν*,” a *synod of robbers*, “to signify that every thing was carried in it by fraud or violence.”†

I recite such outrages with no pleasure, but with mortification and grief for the Christian name. But since Dr. C. thinks it of importance to his cause to urge the *ex parte* decisions of synods and councils in that age, it is proper that readers who may not be in the

* Vol. ii, p. 66.

† Ibid. p. 74.

habit of looking into such things should be made acquainted with the characters by whom, and the manner in which their transactions were too often governed, as may be well supposed in controversies involving conflicting claims of ecclesiastical prerogative. As regards the particular case of the presbyter *Aerius*, who, on the authority of Epiphanius, is stated by Dr. C., p. 146, to have been "condemned as a heretic," in the fourth century, because he "maintained that presbyters were equal to bishops, and had a right to ordain;" together with "some other doctrines," as Dr. C. adds,—as to his "other doctrines," if they were no worse than that charged in the first count of the indictment against him, above stated, the reader can well imagine what must have been the temper of the assembly that condemned him as a *heretic* for *that cause*. He is said, however, to have been a semi-arian; and in so far as this part of the charges against him is concerned, if it be true, we are certainly no more disposed to defend him than Dr. C. But it may not be amiss for the reader to be reminded that denunciations of "heresy," and the mad-dog brand of "heretic" in the age under review and those succeeding it, ought to be received with great caution. The Methodist reader especially, whether Arminian or Calvinistic, will be sensible of the appositeness of this admonition, when, if he look into the chronological tables appended to the valuable *Ecclesiastical History of Mosheim* by the learned translator, he will find under the head of "Heretics, or enemies of revelation," in juxtaposition with the names of the chief infidels of the eighteenth century, the venerated names of "the Moravian brethren, and the followers of Whitefield, Wesley, and others of the same stamp!" Would to God the world were full of "heretics" of that "same stamp."

One of the leading tenets of *Aerius* in truth was, "that bishops were not distinguished from presbyters

by any divine right; but that, according to the institution of the New Testament, their offices and authority were absolutely the same.”* It is perfectly certain, also, as Mosheim adds, that this opinion of his “was highly agreeable to many good Christians, who were no longer able to bear the tyranny and arrogance of the bishops of this century”†—that is, the *fourth* century.

He farther condemned *prayers for the dead*, with some of the stated fasts and festivals, “and other rites of that nature, in which [as Mosheim remarks] the multitude erroneously imagine that the life and soul of religion consists. His *great purpose* [continues the same historian] seems to have been *that of reducing Christianity to its primitive simplicity*,” is it then any longer to be wondered at, that in those days he should have been condemned as a “heretic” by the courtly prelates who basked in the beams of imperial favour? And yet, on the whole, his *doctrinal* error alone excepted, intelligent Christians at this day must think very much better of him than of many of those who condemned him.

It ought not to be overlooked also that the work of Bp. Epiphanius against heresies, to which Dr. C. refers for authority against Aerius, is characterized by ecclesiastical critics as a work that “has little or no reputation, is full of inaccuracies and errors, and discovers almost in every page the levity and ignorance of its author.”‡

But it is time to make the reader acquainted with the truth of the case in regard to Aerius. This I will do in the language of that distinguished Christian antiquary Dr. (afterward Bishop) Stillingfleet.

“In the matter itself, [says Stillingfleet,] I believe, upon the strictest inquiry, Medina’s judgment will prove

* Mosheim, vol. i, p. 376.

† Ibid.

‡ Mosheim, vol. i, p. 349. Dr. Jortin says of Epiphanius that he must have been either a dupe or a deceiver, and that this is the *civilest* thing we can say of him. That “learned and judicious men, who have examined his writings, have been forced to conclude that, with all his learning and piety, [?] he was credulous, careless, censorious, and one who made no scruple of *romancing and misrepresenting*,” Remarks on Ecc. Hist., vol. i, pp. 301, 302.

true, that Jerome, Austin, Ambrose, Sedulius, Primasius, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact, were all of Aeri-
us his judgment as to the identity of both name and order of
bishops and presbyters in the primitive church; but here
lay the difference. Aerius from hence proceeded to
separation from bishops and their churches, because
they were bishops. And Blondell well observes, that
the main ground why Aerius was condemned was for
unnecessary separation from the church of Sebastia;
and those bishops, too, who agreed with him in other
things: whereas, Jerome was so far from thinking it
necessary to cause a schism in the church by separating
from bishops, that his opinion is clear, that the first in-
stitution of them was for preventing schisms; and
therefore, for peace and unity, he thought their institu-
tion very useful in the church of God.”*

Thus it appears that in the judgment of this very
deeply versed and able critic in ecclesiastical antiquities,
and “upon the strictest inquiry,” Aerius, if a heretic in
regard to the point now in hand—the identity of the
order of bishops and presbyters in the primitive church
—was such in very orthodox company, and even that
of the canonized *fathers* and *saints*.

There is moreover one bearing of the very cases which
Dr. C. adduces, to which he seems not to have adverted.
He himself shows sufficiently, that presbyters previously
to the prohibitions of the councils alluded to *did ordain*,
and did claim the Scriptural *right* to do so, in virtue of
their order. Why else were the ecclesiastical canons
made against this practice? Why else were such ordi-
nations declared null, *because performed by presbyters*?
The very prohibitions themselves, (as well observed by
Dr. Campbell,) the very assertions of those whom they
condemned as heretics, prove the practice then proba-
bly wearing, but not quite worn out. There was no

* Irenicum, pp. 276, 277.

occasion for making canons against ordinations by deacons or by laymen, who did not pretend to such a right. In deference, however, to the Apostle Paul's authority, perhaps the bishop still admitted, and even required the presbyters present to join with him in ordaining a presbyter by the imposition of their hands with his, but not in ordaining a bishop.

As to the case of the founder of the Novatian sect, to which Dr. C. repeatedly refers, it should be understood that the whole relation of it, as contained in the sixty-third chapter of the sixth book of Eusebius, is made up of the statements of Cornelius, the successful rival and bitter enemy of Novatus, as his own coarse epithets and vulgar abuse plainly show. The usurped domination and impious ignorance of Cornelius are manifest in those same letters of his own, from which Eusebius makes his extracts. He coolly says, for instance :—"In the roomes of the other bishops [that is, of those who had ordained Novatus] we ordained and sent from us such as should succeed them." Not forsooth, as is plain enough, because they were "simple countrymen," as he represents, nor even because they were "somewhat tipsie" withal, "and well crammed with victuals," as he also alleges,—but *because they had ordained Novatus*.

Again, in the course of the torrent of invectives which he pours out against this late unsuccessful rival in the contest for the episcopal throne in that imperial city, he suggests a doubt, among other things, whether he had ever been canonically baptized, and that afterward, at any rate, he had not obtained confirmation by the hands of the bishop; on which he gravely asks this question,—“Insomuch then as he obtained not that, how came he by the Holy Ghost?”

Mosheim, on the other hand, founds his relation of the matter on the authority both of Cornelius in Eusebius, and of Cyprian, bishop of Carthage. For Mosheim

represents that the Roman presbyter was named *Novatian*, who was assisted in his enterprise by *Novatus*, a presbyter of Carthage, who had come to Rome to escape the resentment of Cyprian, with whom he was highly at variance. So that in reality all the account we have of the matter is from the bitter enemies if not the persecutors of these two presbyters; and considering human nature, and the evidence which, alas! our own times afford, that men as good, perhaps, as some even of the Roman or Carthaginian *saints*, too often follow its unrestrained and unhallowed impulses in such circumstances, we ought perhaps to receive such statements with not a few or inconsiderable grains of allowance.

With these preliminary observations, I am now prepared to say,—(1,) that having carefully examined the statements of Cornelius in Eusebius, I am well persuaded that they carry on the face of them conclusive evidence that they are the vindictive colourings of a personal enemy, and therefore not to be adopted in gross now without large deductions: and (2,) that Novatus doubtless desired episcopal ordination; and may have even too anxiously sought it because that was *then and there the custom of the church*, and canonically required, and consequently, without it—in his own apprehension at least—he was not likely to succeed so well. That bishops were then regarded in the Church of Rome as superior to presbyters in jurisdiction, and by the ecclesiastical custom and canons, there is no doubt. But that they are so *jure divino*, by *divine* institution, remained an unsettled question in that Church, even down to the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century, as any one may see in the long and animated debates upon it, as related by Paul Sarpi, the very able and interesting historian of that renowned assembly.

As to Dr. C.'s strictures on Lord King, it is not necessary to follow him through the various items which he names in that part of his book, in which he repeats often, as is common with him, what he had previously affirmed again and again. In the very outset of his strictures he falls into the fundamental error which logicians denominate *ignoratio elenchi*, a mistake of the question. "Mr. Wesley [he says] professes in his letter to Mr. Asbury, &c., of 1784, to have founded his belief of the sameness of the office of presbyter and bishop on the arguments of Lord King in his Inquiry into the Constitution, &c., of the Primitive Church."* Now Mr. Wesley says no such thing; he made no such profession: and this single observation, so far as Mr. Wesley is concerned, overthrows the whole of what Dr. C. builds on this erroneous foundation; the pure fiction of his own imagination.

"Ibi omnis effusus labor."

What Mr. Wesley does say in his letter "to Dr. Coke," &c., is as follows: "Lord King's account of the primitive church convinced me, many years ago, that bishops and presbyters are the same order." Mark, the same *order*, not the same *office*, as Dr. C. asserts of Mr. Wesley's belief. The superiority of bishops in "*degree*," or official pre-eminence, though not in essential sacerdotal *order*, is carefully and explicitly marked by Lord King in many places of his work, and could not have been overlooked, or intended to be confounded, by Mr. Wesley. Dr. C., however, obviously builds his fabric on the erroneous assumption that both Lord King and Mr. W. made no distinction between ministerial *order*, strictly taken in its technical ecclesiastical sense, and *office*, *grade*, or *degree*, in an order,—as, for example, archpresbyters among presbyters, or archdeacons among

deacons ; or, to repeat a civil illustration, before mentioned, as the speaker of the House of Commons,—officially superior, and occupying the first seat, and yet but a commoner among commoners.

That Dr. C. confounds or overlooks this distinction, and that his argument consequently does not meet Lord King's main position, and of course Mr. W.'s, is plain from several passages in his strictures, but especially from the following :—" Lord King [he says] has entirely passed over the objection to his doctrine arising out of the ordination of bishops. Ordination to an office conveys the idea of introduction into one which the person previously did not hold. If presbyter and bishop was the same office, grade, or order, why were presbyters ordained when they were appointed to a bishoprick ? What was the second ordination for ?"*

Here he evidently speaks of office, grade, or order as all one and the same thing, and as so treated in Lord King's work. And yet nothing is plainer in the express and frequently repeated language of that author, than that the distinction he makes between *order* and official *grade* or *degree* is the very groundwork of his system. The question, therefore, which Dr. C. so confidently asks, viz., "What was the second ordination for ?" is answered with perfect ease and consistency, on the principles of Lord King and Mr. W., and equally on those of the polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Dr. C. himself, indeed, furnishes the answer to his own question ; and nothing can be more appropriate or correct : "Ordination to an office [he says] conveys the idea of introduction into one which the person previously did not hold."* Exactly so. This is the precise import of ordination as understood by Lord K., and also by Mr. W. and the Methodist Episcopal Church. And therefore, while Lord K. explicitly maintains the primitive identity of bishops and presbyters as to the

intrinsic and inherent power of *order*, he as explicitly states, at the same time, that when a presbyter was advanced to the *official degree* of bishop—that is, according to Lord K., was made the actual superintendent, inspector, or overseer of any particular church, and of his fellow presbyters (as well as the deacons) connected therewith,—he was *ordained* to that office by imposition of hands by the neighbouring bishops. But when he says “by the neighbouring *bishops*,” the reader must not forget that he still does not at all mean *diocesan bishops* of a *distinct order*, in Dr. C.’s or the high church sense ; but in *his own* sense of the term *bishop*, as above described.* The same answer, furnished by Dr. C. himself, may very clearly explain to him and to all others why it is that the Methodist Episcopal Church, which maintains the identity of bishop and presbyter as to the intrinsic and inherent power of *order*, still practises a third ordination, when any of her presbyters are advanced to the episcopal degree. It is exactly because, in Dr. C.’s own words, “ordination to an office conveys the idea of introduction into one which the person previously did not hold.”

Having thus cleared the true idea both of the order and the official degree of bishop, as held by Lord King, by Mr. W., and by the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the true basis on which, in accordance with this idea, an appropriate ordination to the episcopal office rests, I shall proceed to give the reader a brief synopsis of Lord K.’s argumentation and deductions from the Christian fathers of the first three centuries, to which he confines his inquiry on the main point in question, viz., the primitive identity of the order of bishops and presbyters. And in the course of it, I am persuaded the intelligent and candid reader cannot but be as forcibly struck with the *modesty* as with the *learned diligence* of that distin-

* See his “Inquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity, and Worship of the Primitive Church,” p. 49.

guished layman, whose authorities and logical deductions were capable of producing so great a change in the previously prejudiced high-church mind of such a man as Wesley. It will serve also to show how little justice has been done by Dr. C. to this main point of Lord K.'s argument. It may be proper, first, however, to apprise the reader that Lord King actually and carefully read and studied the early fathers whom he quotes, and various others, in the Greek and Latin originals, and not in translations, nor "*by the index*," as seems to be Dr. C.'s plan of *discovering* passages.*

In his sixth chapter, Lord King says: "It will be both needless and tedious to endeavour to prove that the ancients generally mention presbyters distinct from bishops. Every one, I suppose, will readily own and acknowledge it. The great question which hath most deplorably sharpened and soured the minds of too many is, what the office and order of a presbyter was: about this the world hath been and still is most uncharitably divided; some equalize a presbyter in every thing with a bishop; others as much debase him; each, according to their particular opinions, either advance or degrade him. In many controversies a middle way hath been the safest, perhaps in this, the medium between the two extremes may be the truest. Whether what I am now going to say be the true state of the matter, I leave to the learned reader to determin; I may be deceived, —neither mine years nor abilities exempt me from mistakes and errors; but this I must needs say, That after the most diligent researches and impartiallest inquiries, the following notion seems to me most plausible, and most consentaneous to truth: and which, with a great facility and clearness, solves those doubts and objections which, according to those other hypotheses, I know not how to answer. But yet, however, I am not so wedded and bigoted to this opinion, but if any shall

produce better and more convincing arguments to the contrary, I will not contentiously defend, but readily relinquish it; since I search after truth, not to promote a particular party or interest.

“Now for the better explication of this point, I shall first lay down a definition and description of a presbyter, and then prove the parts thereof.

“Now the definition of a presbyter may be this:—*A person in holy orders, having thereby an inherent right to perform the whole office of a bishop; but being possessed of no place or parish, not actually discharging it, without the permission and consent of the bishop of a place or parish.*

“But lest this definition should seem obscure, I shall illustrate it by this following instance: As a curate hath the same mission and power with the minister whose place he supplies, yet being not the minister of that place, he cannot perform there any acts of his ministerial function without leave from the minister thereof; so a presbyter had the same order and power with a bishop, whom he assisted in his cure; yet being not the bishop or minister of that cure, he could not there perform any parts of his pastoral office, without the permission of the bishop thereof: so that what we generally render bishops, priests, and deacons, would be more intelligible in our tongue if we did express it by rectors, vicars, and deacons,—by rectors understanding the bishops, and by vicars the presbyters; the former being the actual incumbents of a place, and the latter curates or assistants, and so different in degree but yet equal in order.

“Now this is what I understand by a presbyter; for the confirmation of which these two things are to be proved:

“I. That the presbyters were the bishops’ curates and assistants, and so inferiour to them in the actual exercise of their ecclesiastical commission.

“II. That yet, notwithstanding, they had the same inherent right with the bishops, and so were not of a distinct specific order from them. Or, more briefly, thus,

“1. That the presbyters were different from the bishops *in gradu*, or *in degree*; but yet,

“2. They were equal to them *in ordine*, or *in order*.

“As to the first of these, that presbyters were but the bishops’ curates and assistants, inferior to them in degree, or in the actual discharge of their ecclesiastical commission; this will appear to have been in effect already proved, if we recollect what has been asserted touching the bishop and his office:—that there was but one bishop in a church; that he usually performed all the parts of divine service; that he was the general disposer and manager of all things within his diocese, there being nothing done there without his consent and approbation.”*

He then specifies the various particulars of ministerial functions which a presbyter could not perform without the bishop’s leave; adding at the close:—“But what need I reckon up particulars, when in general there was no ecclesiastical office performed by the presbyters without the consent and permission of the bishop.”†

Having cited his authorities for these statements, he afterward thus proceeds:—

“So then in this sense a presbyter was inferior to a bishop in degree, in that, having no parish of his own, he could not actually discharge the particular acts of his ministerial function without leave from the bishop of a parish or diocese. The bishops were superior to the presbyters in that they were the presented, instituted, and inducted ministers of their respective parishes; and the presbyters were inferior to the bishops in that they were but their curates and assistants.

* Inquiry, &c., pp. 52–55.

† Page 56.

“ § 3. But though the presbyters were thus different from the bishops in degree, yet they were of the very same specific order with them ; having the same inherent right to perform those ecclesiastical offices which the bishop did, as will appear from these three arguments :

“ 1. That by the bishop’s permission they discharged all those offices which a bishop did :—2, that they were called by the same titles and appellations as the bishops were :—and, 3, that they are expressly said to be of the same order with the bishops. As to the first of these, That by the bishop’s permission they discharged all those offices which a bishop did,—this will appear from that,

“ 1. When the bishop ordered them they preached. Thus Origen, in the beginning of some of his sermons, tells us that he was commanded thereunto by the bishop, as particularly when he preached about the witch of *Endor*, he says, *The bishop commanded him to do it.*

“ 2. By the permission of the bishop presbyters baptized. Thus writes Tertullian,—*The bishop has the right of baptizing, and then the presbyters, but not without his leave.*

“ 3. By the leave of the bishop presbyters administered the eucharist, as must be supposed in that saying of Ignatius, ‘That that eucharist only was valid which was celebrated by the bishop, or by one appointed by him, and that the eucharist could not be delivered but by the bishop, or by one whom he did approve.’

“ 4. The presbyters ruled in those churches to which they belonged,—else this exhortation of Polycarpus to the presbyters of Philippi would have been in vain : ‘Let the presbyters be tender and merciful, compassionate towards all, reducing those that are in errors, visiting all that are weak, not negligent of the widow and the orphan, and him that is poor, but ever providing what is honest in the sight of God and man, abstaining from all wrath, respect of persons, and unrighteous judg-

ment, being far from covetousness, not hastily believing a report against any man, not rigid in judgment, knowing that we are all faulty and obnoxious to judgment.' Hence,

"5. They presided in church consistories, together with the bishop, and composed the executive part of the ecclesiastical court, from whence it was called the *presbytery*, because in it, as Tertullian says, 'Approved elders did preside.'

"6. They had also the power of excommunication, as Rogatianus and Numidicus, two presbyters of Cyprian's church, by his order joined with some bishops of his nomination in the excommunication of certain schismatics of his diocese. But of both these two heads more will be spoken in another place.

"7. Presbyters restored returning penitents to the church's peace. Thus we read, in an epistle of Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, that a certain offender called Serapion, approaching to the time of his dissolution, 'sent for one of the presbyters to absolve him, which the presbyter did according to the order of his bishop, who had before commanded that the presbyters should absolve those who were in danger of death.'

"8. Presbyters confirmed, as we shall most evidently prove when we come to treat of confirmation, only remark here by the way, that in the days of Cyprian there was a hot controversy whether those that were baptized by heretics, and came over to the catholic church, should be received as members thereof by baptism and confirmation, or by confirmation alone. Now I would fain know, whether, during the vacancy of a see, or the bishop's absence, which sometimes might be very long, as Cyprian was absent two years, a presbyter could not admit a returning heretic to the peace and unity of the church, especially if we consider their positive damnation of all those that died out of the church. If the presbyters had not had this power of confirmation, many penitent souls must have been damned for the

unavoidable default of a bishop, which is too cruel and unjust to imagine.

“9. As for ordination, I find but little said of this in antiquity ; yet, as little as there is, there are clearer proofs of the presbyters ordaining, than there are of their administering the Lord’s supper. ‘All power and grace,’ saith Firmilian, ‘is constituted in the church, where seniors preside, who have the power of baptizing, confirming, and ordaining ;’ or, as it may be rendered, and perhaps more agreeable to the sense of the place,—‘who had the power as of baptizing, so also of confirming and ordaining.’ What these seniors were will be best understood by a parallel place in Tertullian ; for that place in Tertullian and this in Firmilian are usually cited to expound one another by most learned men, as the most learned Dr. Cave and others. Now the passage in Tertullian is this,—‘In the ecclesiastical courts approved elders preside.’ Now by these approved elders bishops and presbyters must necessarily be understood. Because Tertullian speaks here of the discipline exerted in one particular church or parish, in which there was but one bishop ; and if only he had presided, then there could not have been elders in the plural number ; but there being many elders to make out their number, we must add the presbyters to the bishop, who also presided with him, as we shall more fully show in another place. Now the same that presided in church consistories, the same also ordained. Presbyters as well as bishops presided in church consistories, therefore presbyters as well as bishops ordained. And as in those churches where there were presbyters, both they and the bishop presided together, so also they ordained together, both laying on their hands in ordination ; as St. Timothy was ordained ‘by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery :’ that is, by the hands of the bishop and presbyters of that parish where he was ordained,—as is the constant signification of the word *presbytery* in all the writings of the ancients. But,

“10. Though as to every particular act of the bishop’s office, it could not be proved particularly that a presbyter did discharge them; yet it would be sufficient if we could prove that in the general a presbyter could and did perform them all.—Now that a presbyter could do so, and consequently, by the bishop’s permission, did do so, will appear from the example of the great St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, who, being exiled from his church, writes a letter to the clergy thereof, wherein he exhorts and begs them ‘to discharge their own and his office too, that so nothing might be wanting either to discipline or diligence.’ And much to the same effect he thus writes them in another letter, *Trusting, therefore, to your kindness and religion, which I have abundantly experienced, I exhort and command you by these letters, that in my stead you perform those offices which the ecclesiastical dispensation requires.* And in a letter written upon the same occasion by the clergy of the church of Rome to the clergy of the church of Carthage, we find these words toward the beginning thereof: *And since it is incumbent upon us, who are as it were bishops, to keep the flock in the room of the pastor: if we shall be found negligent, it shall be said unto us as it was said to our careless preceding bishops, in Ezekiel xxxiv, 3, 4, that we looked not after that which was lost, we did not correct him that wandered, nor bound up him that was lame, but we did eat their milk and were covered with their wool.* So that the presbyters were, as it were, bishops, that in the bishop’s absence kept his flock, and in his stead performed all those ecclesiastical offices which were incumbent on him.

“Now then, if the presbyters could supply the place of an absent bishop, and in general discharge all those offices to which a bishop had been obliged if he had been present, it naturally follows that the presbyters could discharge every particular act and part thereof. If I should say, such an one has all the senses of a

man, and yet also assert that he cannot see, I should be judged a self-contradictor in that assertion; for in affirming that he had all the human senses, I also affirmed that he saw, because seeing is one of those senses,—for whatsoever is affirmed of an universal, is affirmed of every one of its particulars. So when the fathers say that the presbyters performed the whole office of the bishop, it naturally ensues that they confirmed, ordained, baptized, &c., because those are particulars of that universal.

“But now, from the whole, we may collect a solid argument for the equality of presbyters with bishops, as to order; for if a presbyter did all a bishop did, what difference was there between them? A bishop preached, baptized, and confirmed; so did a presbyter. A bishop excommunicated, absolved, and ordained; so did a presbyter. Whatever a bishop the same did a presbyter. The particular acts of their office were the same; the only difference that was between them was in degree,—but this proves there was none at all in order.

“That bishops and presbyters were of the same order appears also from that originally they had one and the same name, each of them being indifferently called bishops or presbyters. Hence we read in the Sacred Writ of several bishops in one particular church, as the *bishops of Ephesus* and *Philippi*, that is, the bishops and presbyters of those churches, as they were afterward distinctly called. And Clemens Romanus sometimes mentions many bishops in the church of Corinth whom at other times he calls by the name of presbyters, using those two terms as synonymous titles and appellations. ‘*You have obeyed,*’ saith he, ‘*those that were set over you,*’ τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ὑμῶν, and *let us revere those that are set over us,*’ προηγούμενους ἡμῶν, which are the usual titles of the bishops; and yet these in another place he calls *presbyters*, describing their office by *their sitting or presiding over us*. Wherefore he commands the *Corinthians to be subject to their presbyters*, and whom in

one line he calls *ἐπισκοποι*, or bishops; the second line after he calls *πρεσβυτεροι*, or presbyters. So *Polycarp* exhorts the *Philippians* to be subject to their presbyters and deacons,—under the name of presbyters including both bishops and priests, as we now call them.

“The first that expressed these church officers by the distinct terms of bishops and presbyters was Ignatius, who lived in the beginning of the second century, appropriating the title of bishop, *ἐπισκοπος*, or overseer, to that minister who was the more immediate overseer and governor of his parish; and that of *πρεσβυτερος*, elder or presbyter, to him who had no particular care and inspection of a parish, but was only an assistant or curate to a bishop that had: the word *ἐπισκοπος*, or bishop, denoting a relation to a flock or cure; *πρεσβυτερος*, or presbyter, signifying only a power or ability to take the charge of such a flock or cure,—the former implying an actual discharge of the office, the latter a power so to do.

“This distinction of titles, arising from the difference of their circumstances, which we find first mentioned in Ignatius, was generally followed by the succeeding fathers, who for the most part distinguish between bishops and presbyters, though sometimes, according to the primitive usage, they indifferently apply those terms to each of those persons. Thus, on the one hand, the titles of presbyters are given unto bishops, as Irenæus in his synodical epistle twice calls Anicetus, Pius, Higinus, Telesphorus, and Sixtus, bishops of Rome, *πρεσβυτεροι*, or presbyters. And those bishops who derived their succession immediately from the apostles he calls the presbyters in the church: and whom Clemens Alexandrinus in one line calls the bishop of a certain city not far from Ephesus, a few lines after he calls the presbyter. And on the other hand, the titles of bishops are ascribed to presbyters, as one of the discreitive appellations of a bishop is pastor. Yet Cyprian also calls his

presbyters the pastors of the flock. Another was that of president, or one set over the people. Yet Cyprian also calls his presbyters presidents, or set over the people. The bishops were also called rectors or rulers : so Origen calls the presbyters the governors of the people. And we find both bishops and presbyters included under the common name of presidents or prelates by St. Cyprian, in this his exhortation to Pomponius. ‘And if all must observe the divine discipline, how much more must the presidents and deacons do it, who by their conversation and manners must yield a good example to others?’ Now if the same appellation of a thing be a good proof for the identity of its nature, then bishops and presbyters must be of the same order, because they had the same names and titles. Suppose it was disputed whether a parson and lecturer were of the same order, would not this sufficiently prove the affirmative? That though for some accidental respects they might be distinguished in their appellations, yet originally and frequently they were called by one and the same name. The same it is in this case, though for some contingent and adventitious reasons, bishops and presbyters were discriminated in their titles, yet originally they were always, and afterward sometimes, called by one and the same appellation, and therefore we may justly deem them to be one and the same order. But if this reason be not thought cogent enough, the third and last will unquestionably put all out of doubt, and most clearly evince the identity or sameness of bishops and presbyters as to order. And that is, that it is expressly said by the ancients that there were but two distinct ecclesiastical orders, viz., bishops and deacons, or presbyters and deacons ; and if there were but these two, presbyters cannot be distinct from bishops, for then there would be three.

“Now that there were but two orders, viz., bishops and deacons, is plain from that golden ancient remain of

Clemens Romanus, wherein he thus writes:—‘In the country and cities where the apostles preached, they ordained their first converts for bishops and deacons over those who should believe. Nor were these orders new, for, for many ages past it was thus prophesied concerning bishops and deacons: I will appoint their bishops in righteousness, and their deacons in faith.’ This place of Scripture which is here quoted is in Isa. lx, 17. ‘I will make thine officers peace and thine exactors righteousness.’ Whether it is rightly applied, is not my business to determine. That that I observe from hence is, that there were but two orders instituted by the apostles, viz., bishops and deacons, which Clemens supposes were prophetically promised long before.”*

He then quotes a farther passage from the same epistle of Clemens to the Corinthians, the object of which was to dissuade an unruly faction in that church from a design which they entertained of deposing their presbyters. The great argument of Clemens to this end was, that they ought rather to obey their presbyters, and to desist from their disorderly proceedings against them, because the institution and succession of bishops and deacons was from the apostles themselves, which, continues Lord K., “clearly evinces that presbyters were included under the title of bishops, or rather, that they were bishops. For to what end should Clemens exhort the schismatical Corinthians to obey their presbyters, from the consideration of the apostles’ ordination of bishops, if their presbyters had not been bishops? But that the order of presbyters was the same with the order of bishops, will appear also from that place of Irenæus, where he exhorts us ‘to withdraw from those presbyters who serve their lusts, and, having not the fear of God in their hearts, condemn others, and are lifted up with the dignity of their first session; but to adhere to those

* Inquiry, &c., p. 57–69.

who keep the doctrine of the apostles, and with their presbyterial order are inoffensive and exemplary in sound doctrine and a holy conversation, to the information and correction of others ; for such presbyters the church educates, and of whom the prophet saith, I will give thee princes in peace, and bishops in righteousness.’

“Now that by these presbyters bishops are meant, I need not take much pains to prove ; the precedent chapter positively asserts it, the description of them in this quotation, by their enjoying the dignity of the first session, and the application of that text of Isaiah unto them, clearly evinces it. No one can deny but that they were bishops, that is, that they were superior in degree to other presbyters, or, as Irenæus styles it, honoured with the first session ; but yet he also says that they were not different in order, being of the presbyterial order, which includes both bishops and presbyters.”*

After quoting next a passage from Clemens Alexandrinus, in proof or illustration of the same point, he thus proceeds :—

“So that there were only the two orders of deacons and presbyters, the former whereof being the inferior order, never sat at their ecclesiastical conventions, but, like servants, *stood* and waited on the latter, who *sat* down on *θρονοι*, or seats in the form of a semicircle, whence they are frequently called *consessus presbyterii*, or the session of the presbytery, in which session he that was more peculiarly the bishop or minister of the parish sat at the head of the semicircle on a seat somewhat elevated above those of ‘his colleagues,’ as Cyprian calls them ; and so was distinguished from them by his priority in the same order, but not by his being of another order. Thus the foresaid Clemens Alexandrinus distinguishes the bishop from the presbyters by his being

* Inquiry, pp. 71, 72.

advanced to the *πρωτοκαθεδρια*, or the first seat in the presbytery, not by his sitting in a different seat from them.—For he thus writes, ‘He is in truth a presbyter of the church and a minister of the will of God, who does and teaches the things of the Lord, not ordained by men or esteemed just because a presbyter, but because just, therefore received into the presbytery,—who, although he be not honoured with the first seat on earth, yet shall hereafter sit down on the twenty and four thrones mentioned in the Revelations, judging the people.’ So that both bishops and presbyters were members of the same presbytery, only the bishop was advanced to the first and chiefest seat therein,—which is the very same with what I come now from proving, *viz.*, that bishops and presbyters were equal in order but different in degree: that the former were ministers of their respective parishes, and the latter their curates or assistants.

“Whether this hath been fully proved, or whether the precedent quotations do naturally conclude the premises, the learned reader will easily determine. I am not conscious that I have stretched any words beyond their natural signification; having deduced from them nothing but what they fairly imported. If I am mistaken I hope I shall be pardoned, since I did it not designedly or voluntarily. As before, so now I profess again, that if any one shall be so kind and obliging to give me better information, I shall thankfully and willingly acknowledge and quit mine error; but till that information be given, and the falsity of my present opinion be evinced, (which after the impartiallest and narrowest inquiry I see not how it can be done,) I hope no one will be offended that I have asserted the equality or identity of the bishops and presbyters as to order, and their difference as to pre-eminency or degree.

“§ 4. Now from this notion of presbyters there evidently results the reason why there were many of them in one church, even for the same intent and end, though

more necessary and needful, that curates are now to those ministers and incumbents whom they serve, it was found by experience that variety of accidents and circumstances did frequently occur both in times of peace and persecution, the particulars whereof would be needless to enumerate, that disabled the bishops from attending on, and discharging their pastoral office; therefore that such vacancies might be supplied, and such inconveniences remedied, they entertained presbyters or curates, who during their absence might supply their places, who also were helpful to them whilst they were present with their flocks, to counsel and advise them. Whence Bishop *Cyprian* assures us that he did all things by the common counsel of his presbyters.

“Besides this, in those early days of Christianity, churches were in most places thin, and at great distances from one another; so that if a bishop by any disaster was incapacitated for the discharge of his function, it would be very difficult to get a neighbouring bishop to assist him. To which we may also add, that in those times there were no public schools or universities, except we say the catechetical lecture at *Alexandria* was one for the breeding of young ministers, who might succeed the bishops as they died; wherefore the bishops of every church took care to instruct and elevate some young men, who might be prepared to come in their place when they were dead and gone. And thus, for these and the like reasons, most churches were furnished with a competent number of presbyters, who helped the bishops while living, and were fitted to succeed them when dead.”*

Into the next sentiment advanced by Lord King, he seems to have been led by an erroneous reading of a passage in the edition of Tertullian's works which he used, and which I find corrected in one of Dr. Camp-

* Inquiry, pp. 74-77.

• bell's lectures on Ecclesiastical History, p. 121. The passage as quoted by Lord K. is,—“Ubi ecclesiastici ordinis non est consessus, et offert, et tingit sacerdos, qui est ibi solus.” *Exhort. ad Castitat.* p. 457. And from it he deduces the sentiment that although most churches were furnished with presbyters, yet that this was not essential; a bishop being sufficient, &c. Dr. Campbell says a bishop and “some deacons.” The latter is not added by Lord King, but Dr. Campbell shall speak for himself.

“Some have inferred from a passage of Tertullian that, however general the practice was in the second and subsequent centuries, of settling in every church all the three orders above explained, it was not universal; that in parishes where there were but a few Christians remotely situated from other churches, it was judged sufficient to give them a pastor or bishop only and some deacons. The presbyter then being but a sort of assistant to the bishop, might not, in very small charges, be judged necessary. The thing is not in itself improbable, and the authority above-mentioned, before I had examined it or seen a more accurate edition, led me to conclude it real. But on examination I find that what had drawn me and others into this opinion was no more than a false reading of a sentence quoted in a former lecture. In some editions of Tertullian we read, (*De Exhort. Cast.*) ‘Ubi ecclesiastici ornis non est consessus, et offert, et tinguat, sacerdos qui est ibi solus.’ I need not urge that the expression is quite different in all the best manuscripts and most correct editions: this being one of those glaring corruptions which, after a careful perusal, betray themselves to an attentive reader of any penetration. The words, as I have now transcribed them, considered in connection with the subject treated in the context, have neither sense nor coherence in them, whereas, nothing can be more apposite to the author’s argument than they are in

the way formerly quoted, ‘Ubi ecclesiastici ordinis non est consessus, et offers, et tinguis, et sacerdos es tibi solus.’ So sensible of this were the two learned critics Petavius and Dodwell, that though both were violently disposed, in their different ways, to pervert the meaning, neither thought proper to avail himself of a variation in the reading which would have removed at once what to them was a great stumbling-block. It is indeed a reading which savours more of art than of negligence, and has much the appearance of those inquisitorial corrections which were made on several ancient books in the sixteenth century, especially those published in the papal dominions, or where the holy office was established, in order to adapt the ancient doctrine to the orthodoxy of the day. Now nothing could be more opposite to this, than what seemed to admit that any necessity or exigence whatever could entitle a layman to exercise the function of a priest.”*

A few miscellaneous specimens of Dr. C.’s criticisms on Lord K. shall conclude my notice of this part of his book.

“As for the word *diocess*, [says Lord K.,] by which the bishop’s flock is now usually expressed, I do not remember that ever I found it used in this sense by any of the ancients.”† On this passage Dr. C. remarks as follows:—“Socrates, however, who lived in the fourth century, in his account of the Council of Constantinople, says they decreed that the bishop of a *diocess*, *diæcesis*, should not pass (be translated) to another church.—The word occurs twice more within the compass of a page. It is evident from its being used in the wording of a law or canon that it was common and well understood.”‡

The Council of Constantinople was held about fifteen years before the *close* of the *fourth* century; and So-

* Lect. on Ecclesiastical History, pp. 121, 122. † Inquiry, p. 15. ‡ Page 153.

crates consequently must have written still later. Dr. C. knew that Lord K.'s inquiry was expressly confined to the writers of the *first three centuries*. Yet he says that a word which Lord K. did not remember to have seen, in the sense mentioned, in any writer of the first three centuries, may be found in three instances in a writer nearly *a hundred years later*; and he *infers* from its being once used in a law about that time, that it was *then* common and well understood. Does this, were it even so, disprove any thing that Lord K. had said?

One of Lord King's sentiments was, that the ancient bishoprics were the same as modern parishes, under the proper pastoral care of the bishop, though they might have been larger in extent of territory, or have covered a greater space of ground. In descanting on this topic, Dr. C., to show his view of the subject, selects the church of Jerusalem, among others, as a specimen of the extent of the ancient churches. And as we have authentic accounts of that church in the only certain church history extant,—the Acts of the Apostles,—I will [subject] Dr. C.'s strictures for a moment to the test of that record.*

Among all the writers I have yet looked into, I must say that I have seldom or never met with one who so frequently and so coolly avails himself of the *petitio principii* (begging the question) as Dr. C. Lord King, in proof of his position that presbyters ordained, adduces a passage from Firmilian above quoted. On which Dr. C., after a train of other remarks, makes the following:—"But when, in addition to these considerations we have Firmilian's own declaration that in his epistle he is speaking of bishops, contest is at an end."† How at an end? Is it not the very position of Lord K., sustained by other eminent critics, that the writers of

* [The author appears to have intended to insert here a criticism of this kind, which he had previously written. It will be found in the Appendix, as it could not well be introduced here.—Ed.]

† Page 173.

that period frequently use the terms bishop and presbyter interchangeably,—calling the same persons indifferently by one or the other name? But Dr. C.'s mind seems so engrossed with the notion that bishop can be no other than a high church diocesan, that wherever the word occurs, this idea seems with him a matter of course. The following may be given as an instance:—the phrase "*majores natu*" in Firmilian is rendered by Lord K. "seniors," or, according to the parallel phrase, "*probati seniores*;" in Tertullian, "approved elders:" and that these approved elders, for reasons which Lord K. assigns, included both bishops and presbyters, he says "must necessarily be understood."* On this statement of Lord K.'s, Dr. C. thus argues:—

"It is furthermore to be observed that all Lord King urges on this passage is, that *majores natu* included both the bishop and his presbyters; and that *both they and the bishop* ordained together, both laying on their hands in ordination, as Timothy was ordained by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery: that is, by the hands of the bishop and presbyters of that parish where he was ordained, as is the constant signification of the word *presbytery* in all the writings of the ancients." (Page 62, part i.) By his own account, therefore, a bishop was present at the ordination of Timothy, spoken of in Paul's first epistle to him, and "Paul must have been that bishop."† The reader will observe that his affirmation is, that as a bishop was present, according to Lord K.'s "own account," it follows of course and necessarily that "*Paul must* have been that bishop." And yet nothing is plainer than that, according to Lord K., the bishop was the pastor of that particular church where Timothy was ordained, who, together with the presbyters connected with him in the same church, constituted its "presbytery."

* Inquiry, p. 61

† Page 173.

On leaving Lord King Dr. C. descends at once to the age of the Reformation. And in this field it is wonderful with what facility he puts to flight whole hosts of "men of first-rate talents and learning," as he is compelled to admit they were :* and by a few simple dashes of his own more learned, more fearless, or more honest pen, demolishes at once the fair fame of the immortal band who jeopardized their lives and every earthly interest to rescue Christendom "from the tyranny of the bishop of Rome and all his detestable enormities," as the English reformed litany originally expressed it.

To the admission of the validity of ordination by presbyters, on the part of many of the most distinguished episcopal writers and dignitaries, both "during the progress of the reformation and since," Dr. C. replies, that at most it was but their opinion formed upon various considerations :—in some, from affection for individuals of the continental reformers ; in others, perhaps in *all* of the early English reformers, from *fear* of the consequences of breaking with the non-episcopal churches ; that some "were not Episcopalians in principle, [not of Dr. C.'s "stamp" certainly,] but were secretly plotting to subvert the order of the church :—"that "even some *bishops* were *suspected* of being opposed to it ;" and finally, that "*all* were more or less influenced by the *fear* of breaking with the continental reformers."†—So that in *all* of them, according to Dr. C., this pusillanimous motive operated either to impair their intellect, or else to destroy their integrity in a matter which, on his scheme, is essential to the very being of the Christian church ! Even the amiable and *truly apostolical and Christian* spirit which breathed in the breast of the magnanimous *Usher*,—who avowed that although he deemed those churches which had no bishops defective in government, yet that he loved and honoured them as true members of the universal church, and that, were

* Page 179.

† Page 178.

he in Holland, he would receive the blessed sacrament at the hands of the Dutch with the like affection that he would from the hands of the French minister, were he at Clarenton,*—even this illustrious primate's motives must fall under Dr. C.'s imputation of weakness or of dishonesty. Nay, the no less amiable and equally apostolical and Christian spirit of the continental reformers, who received the English episcopal fugitives from the terrors of bloody Mary "with the utmost cordiality," and treated them "with the greatest friendship and hospitality," in passing through Dr. C.'s alembic, is strangely transmuted into an auxiliary of his cause. One would suppose, if the characteristics of discipleship established by the Master are to be regarded, that it ought to be considered rather as a proof of the Christian genuineness of churches whose leaders and members breathed such a spirit.—"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another:"† a testimony worth ten thousand "passages," genuine or spurious, from St. Ignatius, or any other uninspired saint. This spirit, which *reciprocally* animated the English and continental churches, in their official and ministerial intercourse with each other, in those golden days of mutual and joint resistance to high church and popery, Dr. C.'s doctrine would and does, at this day, banish from the earth. It is the doctrine of thorough sectarian bigotry and Scriptural schism. For what is schism, in the true Scriptural sense, but the alienation of Christians from each other *in heart*. And if this be its genuine import, as, on the authority of inspiration, we affirm it is, then whose doctrine, tested by this infallible criterion, is most schismatical, that of Usher, or that of Dr. C.? In other words, whose is most hostile or friendly to that fundamental principle of Christianity among Christians and churches,—mutual love? whose tends most to conciliate their

* Letter to Dr. Bernard.

† John xiii. 35.

affections where differences have unhappily arisen, or, by means of uncharitable and dogmatical decisions to widen the breach, and hinder their reciprocal recognition and ecclesiastical intercourse? Where the former spirit prevails, it is Christian; where the latter, it is schismatical.

I know that Dr. C. is pleased to say, that it is "far from being the desire of those who believe that episcopal [high church] ordination alone is valid, to prevent any qualified person from entering into the ministry."—And that "they only wish" them to "obtain that" "authority" "which is" valid.* That is to say, in effect, "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbad him, *because he followeth not us.*" The answer of Jesus is our answer. If the reader please he may look at it, Mark ix, 38, and Luke ix, 49. Can any be so blind as not to discern the very spirit of the sectary lurking under the cloak of Dr. C.'s apparent liberality?†

I find little in the remaining part of Dr. C.'s work that is worthy of observation. What he says in reference to Mr. W. and on the Scripture argument, will be noticed hereafter.‡ It would seem, indeed, according to Dr. C., that not only the Scriptures, and all the ancient Christian writers, but even the master spirits among the continental reformers, (from *fear* of whom, mark it, according to the same Dr. C., or from affection for whom, the English episcopal reformers had proved recreant to their own principles and to their church, many of them having been corrupted in this respect by the great hospitality and friendship of those said continental reform-

* Pages 147, 148.

† [Here is a note in the MS. indicating that the author intended to insert an extract from something which he had previously written. To avoid confusion, it is given in the Appendix.—Ed.]

‡ [Never accomplished, except so far as the Scripture argument is taken up in his reply to Dr. Onderdonk, at the close of this book.—Ed.]

ers during an actual residence among them!) are in favour of the high church scheme. Now this is really passing strange. That they should have been in sentiment and in heart at least decided Episcopalians themselves, and yet, not only by their public acts and writings, but in their intimate, social, and confidential personal intercourse, have so greatly and so injuriously influenced episcopalians against episcopacy! The inconsistency of these opposite grounds, both taken by Dr. C., is so manifest and glaring, that I am driven to the conclusion that he mistakes his men and mistakes their meaning. The continental reformers, in a noble and commendable reciprocation of the truly Christian and enlightened spirit of the English episcopal reformers, undoubtedly admitted the *lawfulness* of episcopacy, and in certain circumstances its expediency and high utility. That there was nothing in it, when properly understood, inconsistent with gospel principles or apostolical precept or example:—that it had in fact, prevailed in the church generally from a very early period, if not from the days of the apostles; and that, from these considerations there was nothing in it, thus understood, to offend a good conscience or to require separation from episcopal communion. That those of them who went the farthest meant nothing more, is evident from Dr. C.'s own selected passages from Grotius himself, of whom he makes the largest and strongest use. I need not here repeat what has been so often mentioned by others, that Grotius is believed to have become somewhat soured by the ill treatment he received from the Presbyterian churches of Holland. His own language, as quoted by Dr. C. himself, is sufficient for my present purpose. The very title of one of the sections of Grotius, from which Dr. C. takes a number of his quotations, is, “*The episcopal superiority is not of Divine command.*” This proposition he then proceeds to establish by a variety of arguments, and explicitly asserts

that what he thus alleges for "the equality of pastors" is "not at all repugnant to the former;"—that is, to what he had before said on the subject of episcopacy. He shows plainly also, that he understood Jerome in the sense which has been herein represented, and that he himself adopted the same views. "Jerome says, [remarks Grotius,] *The bishops became greater than the presbyters, more by custom than by the truth of the Divine ordering.*" He quotes St. Augustine, bishop of Hippo in the same century, to the same effect, as follows: "*The episcopate is greater than the presbyterate in the name of honour which the practice of the church hath retained.*" Epist. xix. He admits indeed that when the fathers speak of "custom," they do not exclude that of the apostolical age itself: but contends at the same time that not every apostolical institution or practice is therefore necessarily of Divine command; of which he alleges several instances, and then continues thus:—"Add also, that the apostles so instituted bishops, that they left certain churches without bishops: Epiphanius acknowledges this:—*There was need of presbyters and deacons, for by these two the ecclesiastical offices could be fulfilled; but when there was not found any one worthy of the episcopate, the place remained without a bishop; but when there was need, and there were persons worthy of the episcopate, bishops were appointed.* Those churches, therefore, as Jerome says, *were governed by the common council of presbyters.*"

In his notes on some of the above extracts, Dr. C. makes the assertion that we are not only bound to believe what the apostles taught, but that "what they did we are bound to practise."*

He observes also, that the apostles did not "command that the church should be governed by the common

* Page 191. [A note in the MS. here, indicates that the author intended to add some instances to illustrate the absurdity of such a principle. Such, however, will readily present themselves to the reader.—Ed.]

council of presbyters." This is granted, and accordingly and consistently, we maintain, that the presbyterian model of church polity is no more of essential, universal, and perpetual obligation, by Divine right, than high-church episcopacy.

If any thing be yet wanting to set Grotius's opinion in a clear light, the following with ordinary persons, though probably not with Dr. C., seem to be sufficient. "All the ancients [says Grotius] confess that there was no act so peculiarly the bishop's [*confirmation*, of course, included, Dr. C. to the contrary notwithstanding] that it might not also be exercised by the presbyter, except the right of ordaining." He quotes Chrysostom and *Jerome* to show this, and then adds:—"But although the right of ordaining *is taken away from presbyters*, [mark, '*is taken away*,' not that they never possessed it,] according to the opinion of these fathers, which constitution (or law) may be seen in many councils universal and local, [which shows by what means, in his view, the right had been *taken away* from presbyters,] what nevertheless hinders that we may interpret it so that presbyters could ordain no one without the bishop's consent?"

A little after he says, "Yet I do not see how that can be refuted, where there are not bishops, that ordination might be rightly performed even by a presbyter." And again:—"Then, as we have said above, it is doubtful whether presbyters, who neither have presbyters under them nor a bishop over them, belong to (the order of) bishops, or to (that of) mere presbyters. For Ambrose thus argues of Timothy,—*he, who had no other before him, was a bishop*. Indeed, (that we may take an example from the republic,) many things are lawful to a senate not having a king, which are not lawful to a senate constituted under a king. Because a senate without a king is as it were a king."

The passage of "Ambrose," above alluded to by Gro-

tius, is probably that of *Hilary*, whose works are always bound up with those of Ambrose, and by some blunder in the editors, says Dr. Campbell, continue to pass under his name. Dr. C. seems also to have taken Hilary as Ambrose. The entire passage is one which I cannot but think entirely refutes the efforts made by Dr. C. in a former part of his work to enlist Hilary in his service. It also explains fully the observation which Dr. C. so often repeats, on the credit of Hilary, that though every bishop is a presbyter, yet every presbyter is not a bishop. The connection and explanation of this very just saying, as given by Hilary himself, Dr. C. is careful to omit. But the reader shall have it in Hilary's own words, from his Commentary on the third chapter of first Timothy; of which the papal critic Richard Simon says, there are few ancient comments on the epistle of St. Paul, and even on the whole New Testament, which can be compared with this. The words are:—

“Post episcopum tamen diaconi ordinationem subjecit. Quare? nisi quia episcopi et presbyteri una ordinatio est? Uterque enim sacerdos est. Sed episcopus primus est; ut omnis episcopus presbyter sit, non omnis presbyter episcopus. Hic enim episcopus est, qui inter presbyteros primus est. Denique Timotheum presbyterum ordinatum significat, sed quia ante se alterum non habebat, episcopus erat.”*

After such explicit declarations as those above quoted, from Grotius, it surely must be an attempt which presumes not a little on the reader's credulity or ignorance, to undertake to class that eminent man among the supporters of *Dr. C.*'s notions of episcopacy, and not less so

* See Campbell's Lect. on Eccl. Hist., p. 116.

[“After the bishop he places the order of deacon. Why? unless it be because the ordination of bishop and presbyter is one? For each is a priest. But the bishop is first; so that every bishop is a presbyter, not every presbyter a bishop. For he is a bishop who is first among the presbyters. Finally, he declares that Timothy was ordained a presbyter, but because he had no other before him, he was a bishop.”—Ed.]

certainly to rank in the same class even *Calvin* and *Beza*! The latter of these eminent men, indeed, according to Grotius, (who was expressly speaking at the same time of "the churches which have no bishops,") thought it ought by no means to be omitted that "it was essential that, by the perpetual ordination of God, it was, it is, and it will be necessary *that some one in the presbytery, chief both in place and dignity, should preside* to govern the proceedings with that right which is given to him by God:" meaning obviously, that in every presbytery there should be a *presiding presbyter, chief both in place and dignity*, to govern the proceedings *as president*, with a right to exact the submission required by order and the ecclesiastical constitution, in accordance with the general principle ordained of God,—let every soul be subject to the higher powers,—agreeably to the specific constitution of government under which they live, whether of church or state.

In fine, Grotius's view of episcopacy *in fact*, apart from *names* and *forms*, which do not at all alter *things*, is set forth with the lucidness of a sunbeam, in the following emphatic passage:—"And (if with Zanchius [says that very eminent man] I will acknowledge the truth) *in reality* no men were *bishops* more than those very men whose authority availed to oppose even the episcopate."

The above extracts are from Grotius's work on Church Government, in the words of the translations adopted by Dr. C. himself.

In regard to *Calvin* Dr. C. makes an extract of some length from his Institutes, [book iv, chap. iv, 2,] which I beg leave to submit entire, for a reason which will immediately appear. It is as follows:—

"They named all those on whom was enjoined the office of teaching presbyters. These chose one of their number in every city, to whom in particular they gave the title of bishop; lest from equality, as usually hap-

pens, dissensions should arise. Yet the bishop was not so superior in honour and dignity, that he had dominion over his colleagues : but those duties which a consul performs in the senate, that he may report concerning matters, collect their opinions, go before others in consulting, admonishing, exhorting, regulate the whole proceedings by his own authority, and execute what may have been determined in common council ; that office the bishop sustained in the assembly of presbyters. And the ancients themselves confess that it was introduced by human agreement, through the necessity of the times. Thus Jerome, on the epistle to Titus, says : ‘ A presbyter is the same as a bishop. And before that by the instigation of the devil dissensions were made in religion, and it was said among the people, I am of Paul, I of Cephas, the churches were governed by the common council of presbyters. Afterward, that the seeds of dissension might be taken away, the whole charge was committed to one. As, therefore, the presbyters know that they are subject by the custom of the church to him who is over them ; so the bishops may have known that they are superior to the presbyters more by custom than by the Lord’s appointment, and ought to govern the church in common.’ He elsewhere, however, teaches how ancient the institution was. For he says, at Alexandria, from Mark the evangelist to Heraclas and Dionysius, the presbyters always placed one chosen from themselves in a higher degree, whom they call bishop.”—“ To every city was allotted a certain region which received its presbyters from thence, and was added to the body of that church.—Every college (as I have said) was subject to one bishop, for the sake of government only and preserving peace ; who so exceeded others in dignity that he was subject to the assembly of the brethren. But if the tract of country which was in his bishopric was so large that he could not fulfil all the duties of a bishop,

presbyters were appointed in certain places through that country who should discharge his duty in minor matters."

In the sentence immediately following this extract, Dr. C. says: "In this passage Calvin fully admits the main facts contended for by Episcopalians."* He certainly does admit in it the main facts contended for by *Methodist Episcopalians*; and if Dr. C. is satisfied with the footing on which *Calvin* places the subject in this passage, then am I perfectly content here to end the controversy, and to leave every reader for himself to judge and interpret Calvin's language without a word of comment from any quarter. For nothing, to my humble apprehension, could be more diametrically opposite to Dr. C.'s "main" positions, than those here asserted by that learned and eminent reformer.

On the same page with the above extract there is a note of Dr. C.'s, which seems to me to be a curiosity in logic. He undertakes to prove that Jerome "did not then confess it, as Calvin says," "that a presbyter is the same as a bishop." He commences, indeed, with saying, "according to Dr. Miller:" but concludes with the broad affirmation which I have just stated. What then did Jerome do? Why, says Dr. C., "He only inferred, and he himself calls it an opinion." That is to say, Jerome's words, according to Dr. Miller, are,—“A presbyter therefore is the same as a bishop.”† And yet Dr. C. gravely and stoutly denies that, even with regard to the primitive period of which Jerome was speaking, this is either a confession or an assertion that a presbyter was the same as a bishop! With an author who can allow himself such liberty argument surely must be hopeless.

To be obliged to read the same things a hundred times over in one small volume is irksome enough; but

* Page 198.

† Miller's Letters, p. 180.

to be obliged to answer them as often would be still more so ; and yet one must do this, or pass by much that Dr. C. says. The very strong terms and phrases "impossible," "utterly impossible," "the only possibility," "the very idea is absurd," "an absurdity too great to be advocated by any man in his senses," and others similar, which so frequently occur in this gentleman's production, seem to me neither to add any special grace to style, nor force to argument, and to evince rather more of overweening conceit of his own opinions on the part of the author, than of modest respect for his readers, who—as above said—within the vast scope of bare possibility, might possibly happen to differ from him.

For example, Dr. C. says, "The only possibility of a breach in the episcopal succession could arise from the bishops at some period of the church laying aside the ceremony of ordination, or allowing other than bishops to ordain bishops. The first idea is an absurdity too great to be advocated by any man in his senses ; and as to the other, when no instance can be produced by the ablest and most learned advocates for presbyterian ordination, in which presbyters laid on hands by permission of the church until the year 657—."*

Now in regard to "the first idea" in the above passage, I would just remind Dr. C. of "the case of the episcopal churches in the United States" at the close of our revolutionary war ; and then let him consider the "Sketch of a Frame of Government," offered by Dr. White on that occasion, in which he says,—" 'In each smaller district there should be elected a general vestry or convention, consisting of a convenient number, (the minister to be one.) They should elect a clergyman their *permanent president* ; who, in conjunction with other

* Page 206. Dr. C. afterward, page 210, acknowledges this date to be erroneous, and that what he alludes to here was in the fourth century, and not in the seventh, as here.

clergymen, to be also appointed by the body, may exercise such powers as are purely spiritual, *particularly that of admitting to the ministry,*' p. 11."

"Again : 'The conduct meant to be recommended is, to include in the proposed frame of government a *general approbation of episcopacy* and a declaration of an intention to procure the succession as soon as conveniently may be ; but in the meantime *to carry the plan into effect without waiting for the succession.*' *Ibid.*, p. 15."

"'But it will also be said,' continues Dr. White, 'that the very name of "*bishop*" is offensive ; if so, *change it for another* ; let the *superior clergyman* be a *president*, a *superintendent*, or in plain English, and according to the literal translation of the original, an *overseer*. However, if *names* are to be reprobated, because the powers annexed to them are abused, there are few appropriated to either civil or ecclesiastical distinctions, which would retain their places in our catalogue.' *Ibid.*, p. 17."

Is it not plain from the above that Dr. W. did not consider it so perfectly absurd an idea that there might be a valid episcopacy in fact, under whatever name, simply by election, without the usual ceremony of ordination ? It would seem, he must either have meant this, or that there should be an episcopal consecration by presbyters. Dr. C. may take his choice.

Again : some very learned men have been of opinion, (and I merely mention this in evidence that the idea possibly may not be so utterly absurd,) that the episcopal church of Alexandria did perhaps actually dispense with the usual form of imposing hands in the creation of bishops, for about two hundred years ; using no other forms than simple election, and the subsequent instalment and salutation, as the army created an emperor, or deacons an archdeacon.

As to the other part of Dr. C.'s alternative, viz., "allowing other than bishops [in his sense] to ordain

bishops,"—he cannot be permitted, without contradiction, to persist in repeating a hundred times over, when at least the long series of such ordinations, virtually or formally, in the ancient apostolical church of Alexandria stands recorded, in so many learned pages, an imperishable refutation of the baseless assertion. Nor is there any evidence that "the church," universal or particular, ever condemned them. As to "the ancient church" of the fourth and fifth centuries, and the councils of that period, they have already been sufficiently considered.*

The progressive tendency, as the church became more and more corrupt, and the hierarchy more firmly established, to restrict the right of ordaining bishops, is manifest from the fact, admitted by Dr. C.,† that after the rise of metropolitan bishops, they began gradually to claim to themselves this exclusive right.

Before closing his work, Dr. C. says, "It has been doubted whether the ordination of Archbishop Parker, through whom all the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church of England derive their ordination, was perfectly canonical; because the persons who ordained him had been deprived of their bishoprics and expelled the country by the Popish party, on the accession of Mary to the crown of England. The question to be settled in this case is, whether a bishop who is expelled from his bishopric by a successful party, in the contest about doctrines which have in all ages agitated the church, is hereby deprived of his *character* of bishop."‡

On this quotation I would ask, (1.) Was the contest of the English reformers with the Church of Rome one merely "about doctrines?"—Why, then, was that peti-

* Dr. Jortin remarks, that "he who will believe all that he finds related by the writers of the fourth and fifth centuries, should be provided with a double portion of credulity, and have the stomach of an ostrich to digest fables."—*Remarks on Eccl. Hist.*, vol. i, p. 168.

† Page 207.

‡ Ibid.

tion inserted in the early litany of the Church of England, "From the tyranny of the bishop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities, good Lord, deliver us?"

(2.) What does Dr. C. mean by the episcopal "*character*?" That he does not mean the personal religious or moral character of a bishop is plain. Does he mean, then, that mysterious something which Romanists assert to be imprinted in orders, and which some of them define to be "a power to work a spiritual effect?" or, with others of them, does he admit "the *character*" to be merely "a deputation to a special office?"* Whether, even according to the former definition, the *character* may not be lost or taken away, I shall not here discuss.† But if Dr. C. intends it in the

* The reader may see some curious disquisitions on this subject in Sarpi's History of the Council of Trent, page 593. In the debate in that body on the question of the *character*, was involved the fundamental point in this controversy, viz., whether in the sacrament of *orders*, as the Romanists consider it, any higher *character* can be imprinted than that of *priesthood*. On this point, even at that period, late in the sixteenth century, the doctors and theologues, prelates, and cardinals, in that famous papal assembly itself, were greatly divided.

† The reader who desires to know the true "character" of those who filled the "apostolical chairs," both in the eastern and western churches, during a long series of the boasted successions, *by divine right*, from which high-church ultraists, Greek or Roman, Protestant or Papal, claim exclusive title to minister in holy things, may see it amply and revoltingly enough portrayed in Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii, pp. 389, 390. The following is a specimen:—

"To those who consider the primitive dignity, and the solemn nature of the ministerial character, the corruptions of the clergy must appear deplorable beyond all expression. These corruptions were mounted to the most enormous height in that dismal period of the church which we have now before us. Both in the eastern and western provinces, the clergy were, for the most part, shamefully illiterate and stupid, ignorant more especially in religious matters, equally enslaved to sensuality and superstition, and capable of the most abominable and flagitious deeds. This miserable degeneracy of the sacred order was, according to the most credible accounts, principally owing to the pretended chiefs and rulers of the universal church, who indulged themselves in the commission of the most odious crimes, and abandoned themselves to the lawless impulse of the most licentious passions without reluctance or remorse; who confounded, in short, all difference between just and unjust, to satisfy their impious ambition; and whose spiritual empire was such a diversified scene of iniquity and violence as never was

latter sense, then may it not be lost by deprivation, as in the case of the Protestant bishops, of whom Dr. C. speaks, in the reign of Mary, who were deprived by the existing authority, both ecclesiastical and civil? The case of the bishop of Worcester, who fled to the continent on the death of Mary, and was recognised as a bishop in the Council of Trent, is not parallel. For in the latter case it was the papal church acknowledging its own bishop; whereas, the former was that of bishops resisting and separating from that mother church from which they had derived their authority, and to which they had owed obedience; and who, consequently, were *schismatics*, both on [Dr. C.'s] principles and those of the Church of Rome.

Dr. Miller quotes a passage from *Hilary*, a Roman deacon in the fourth century, which he renders thus:—"In *Egypt*, even at this day, the presbyters ordain in the bishop's absence." No, says Dr. C., the passage does not mean that they ordain, but that they confirm; the word used by Hilary is "*consignant*;" which Ainsworth renders "*seal, sign, mark, register, record, confirm, and ratify*." Now, continues Dr. C., "there is not one of these words that does not correspond with the real

exhibited under any of those temporal tyrants who have been the scourges of mankind. We may form some notion of the Grecian patriarchs from the single example of Theophylact, who, according to the testimonies of the most respectable writers, made the most impious traffic of ecclesiastical promotions, and expressed no sort of care about any thing but his dogs and horses. Degenerate, however, and licentious as these patriarchs might be, they were, generally speaking, less profligate and indecent than the Roman pontiffs.

"The history of the Roman pontiffs, that lived in this century, is a history of so many monsters, and not of men, and exhibits a horrible series of the most flagitious, tremendous, and complicated crimes, as all writers, even those of the Romish communion, unanimously confess."

Can the most veteran and indomitable controvertist have the hardihood seriously to undertake to persuade Protestant Christians of the 19th century, that the horrible "monsters" above mentioned, in both the eastern and western hemisphere, were truly "called of God, as was Aaron,"—"moved by the Holy Ghost," and throughout their flagitious career enjoyed exclusively the fulfilment of that gracious promise, "Lo, I am with you alway?" He who can digest such a fable, must indeed, as Jortin said on another occasion, "have the stomach of an ostrich."

signification of *confirming* by the bishop.—But there is not one of these words that has any reference to setting apart by ordination.”* The reader will not forget that Dr. C. elsewhere denies as stoutly that presbyters anciently confirmed as that they ordained. Here he is obliged to admit it to be Hilary’s testimony that they confirmed, in order to avoid admitting it as a testimony that they ordained. But then what becomes of the “*character*” imprinted in ordination; if not one of the words used by Ainsworth to express the sense of *consigno* “has any reference to setting apart by ordination?” To “sign,” to “mark,”—have these terms no reference whatever to impressing or imprinting a “*character*?”

But there is much more yet to be said as to the ground on which the regularity of the archiepiscopal ordination of Dr. Parker, through whom all the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church of England and America claim title, is disputed. In the reign of Henry VIII. the bishops of the Popish party,—although it does not appear that Cranmer (or perhaps the rest) did so, *in that reign*, as Burnet says,—took out commissions, by which they solemnly acknowledged “That all jurisdiction, civil and ecclesiastical, flowed from the king, and that they exercised it only at the king’s courtesie; and as they had of his bounty, so they would be ready to deliver it up when he should be pleased to call for it; and therefore the king did empower them, *in his stead*, to ordain, give institution, and do all the other parts of the episcopal function, which was to last during his pleasure.”† “By this [says Bishop Burnet expressly] they were made indeed *the king’s bishops*.”‡

Again:—In the succeeding reign of Edward VI., in the year 1547, the same historian says, “All that held

* Page 125.

† Burnet’s Abridgment of the History of the Reformation, book i, pp. 228, 229.

‡ Ibid., p. 229.

offices were required to come and renew their commissions, and to swear allegiance to the king: among the rest, the bishops came and took out *such commissions as were granted in the former reign*, only by those they were subaltern to the king's vicegerent, but there being none now in that office, they were immediately subaltern to the king; and by them they were to hold their bishoprics only during the king's pleasure, and were empowered in the king's name, as his delegates, to perform all the parts of the episcopal function. *Cranmer* set an example to the rest in taking out one of those. It was thought fit thus to keep the bishops under the terror of such an arbitrary power lodged in the king, that so it might be more easy to turn them out, if they should much oppose what might be done in points of religion: but the ill consequences of such an unlimited power being well foreseen, the bishops that were afterward promoted were not so fettered, but were provided to hold their bishoprics during life."*

In the same reign an act of parliament was passed, "that the *conge d'elire* and the election pursuant to it being but a shadow, since the person was named by the king, should cease for the future, and that bishops should be named by the king's letters patent, and thereupon be consecrated."†

"The form of the patent was, That the king appointed such a one to be bishop during his natural life, or as long as he behaved himself well; and gave him power to ordain or deprive ministers, to exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and perform all the other parts of the episcopal function that by the word of God were committed to bishops, and this they were to do *in the king's name and by his authority*."‡

Among those created bishops by the king's letters patent, by which he was empowered to ordain, and to

* Burnet's Abridgment of the History of the Reformation, book ii, pp. 4, 5.

† *Ib.*, p. 37.

‡ *Ib.*, p. 193.

perform all the other parts of the *episcopal* function, *in the king's name and by his authority*, was Barlow, one of those very persons by whom Dr. Parker was set apart for the office of archbishop.* Another of them was Scory, and Neal calls Barlow and Scory bishops elect."† He states also, that although *Coverdale* and *Hodgkins*, the remaining two, assisted in Parker's ordination, yet they never exercised the episcopal character afterward.‡ It is certain, moreover, that efforts were made, *in the first instance*, to induce *three of the Popish bishops who had not been deprived* in the preceding reign to unite in the ordination, and they were first named (*viz. Tonstal, Bourn, and Pool*) in the warrant which was issued by the queen (Elizabeth) for this purpose. This is a demonstration that the union of three bishops who had not been deprived was then deemed important, if not essential, to the canonical validity of the ordination: otherwise, the warrant, in the circumstances of that time, would never have embraced three Popish bishops. But not one of the bishops who had not been deprived would act. And hence the ordination, from necessity, not of choice, was performed by deprived bishops.

In this state of facts then the objection to the canonical validity of Dr. Parker's archiepiscopal ordination is, that it was performed by persons who had been legally deprived in the preceding reign, and had not been restored. About seven years afterward, indeed, the matter was brought before the British parliament, both houses of which, to silence clamor, confirmed the ordination of Parker, and the ordinations derived from him. But be it remembered, (1,) that this only proves the more strongly the seriousness of the doubts then existing as to the validity of what had been done; and, (2,) that the confirmation of it *by an act of parliament* was, after all, but a *lay* confirmation.

* Burnet's Hist., &c., p. 193.

† History of the Puritans, vol. i, p. 181.

‡ Ibid.

Yet farther:—In another part of his work, p. 149, Dr. C. argues that the consent or intention of the grantor is necessary to the validity of a grant; and builds a similar argument on the understanding of the grantee, at the time of receiving the grant. Now I have proved that in the year 1547 the English bishops took out episcopal commissions as “subaltern to the king,” and to perform all the parts of the episcopal function *in his name*, and *as his delegates*.* On these terms, then, episcopal authority was both granted and received, and it was so expressly *understood* and *agreed* by *both parties* at the time. The Protestant bishops among these were deprived in the succeeding reign; and when they took part, in the year 1559, in the ordination of Parker, had never been legally restored. This I believe to be the true state of the case, and shall submit it to the reader’s own judgment whether, on the principles by which the deprived bishops held their commissions, and those laid down by Dr. C. as above quoted, the episcopal ordination of Dr. Parker was clearly and perfectly canonical and valid.

* Burnet, Book ii, pp. 4, 5.

[*Unfinished Remarks on Bishop Onderdonk's tract, entitled*
"EPISCOPACY TESTED BY SCRIPTURE."]

IN passing to Dr. Onderdonk's tract, the first remark I have to make is, that it is essentially defective in not furnishing at the outset a clear definition of the precise import which he attaches to the term "episcopacy." The manner in which he evidently avails himself of the vagueness of this term throughout his tract renders his whole argument fallacious, and a mere sophism. The *ground* on which he proposes to build his argument is otherwise excellent, and exactly that on which we desire to meet all opponents; viz., "the Scriptural evidence of episcopacy." Equally excellent is the principle by which he agrees that the discussion ought to be restricted, viz., that "no argument is worth taking into account that has not a palpable bearing on the clear and naked topic,—the Scriptural evidence." I regret exceedingly, therefore, that it did not occur to Dr. O., or else that he did not find it convenient, or think it expedient, or even necessary in order to a fair issue, to state with candour and precision what he means by a term of such fundamental importance in the discussion as to involve within itself, it would seem, some one specific frame of polity, of universal and perpetual obligation, by Divine authority, on the whole church of Christ on earth. This capital defect at the very commencement of Dr. O.'s offer of an issue in the argument is the more to be regretted, because he undoubtedly knows, not only that the term "episcopacy" is a very vague one in itself, but that it is very variously understood, not only by different denominations of Christians, but by different classes of the same denomination, and even within his own. The Romanists have an "episcopacy;" the Church of England, and the Protestant Episcopal, and some others, an "episcopacy;" and high and low church

Episcopalians among themselves; the Methodist Episcopal have an "episcopacy;" nay, Presbyterians admit and contend for "episcopacy." And I know not, indeed, any denomination that, in some form and to some extent or other, does not both recognise the principle and practise the thing, viz., some species of ministerial superiority,—graduated or otherwise,—in a superintending care, charge, government, inspection, or oversight of a church or churches.

It seems to me, therefore, with great deference, that it is Dr. O. himself who inflicts the "forensic injustice" of complicating this "plain topic," by making up an issue so perfectly vague and indefinite that it may be widened or narrowed, stretched or shortened at convenience, as circumstances dictate,—to mean, in fact, almost just any thing or nothing.

If by "episcopacy" be meant that high-church scheme of ecclesiastical polity which maintains that there are three, and only three, essentially distinct ministerial orders, divinely ordained to be universally and perpetually binding on the church of Christ, so that without them there can be no true church or valid Christian ministry or ordinances, and that of these three orders the episcopal, as inherently and essentially distinct and supreme by Divine appointment and right, has alone and exclusively the power and authority to ordain other ministers,—and that all this is apparent from God's own word, as an essential part of the Christian revelation:—then we understand the issue, and are prepared to meet it.

I must here, however, do Dr. O. the justice to say, and I do it with pleasure, that from *this* issue *he*, at least, blenches; and in so doing, as I humbly conceive, he clearly gives up the essence of the high-church cause, and confesses it to be untenable. It ought not to be forgotten, moreover, that this respectable prelate, the "assistant bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church

in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania," wrote *after* Dr. C., with his book before him, and probably understood the subject at least as well as the medical gentleman just named, and was evidently as much disposed to press the high-church pretensions to as great an extent as he conscientiously could. Yet this more candid, more liberal, or better informed opponent, with all his manifest predisposition and bias to the other side, felt himself bound to say that those who "maintain that episcopacy is essential to the being of a church," assert an "extreme opinion," to which he "subscribes not."*

Inconsistent, however, as Dr. O. is, in admitting that episcopacy, in his sense of it, is not essential to the being of a church, and yet maintaining that "*no* plea," not even that of "*necessity*," will justify a departure from it,—I shall proceed with an examination of the process by which he reaches his conclusions. And in doing so, I must give notice, once for all, that in speaking of episcopacy as advocated by him, I do it always in the high-church sense, with the single exception above named, as to its indispensableness to the being of a church.

Another fatal fallacy which lurks at the very foundation of Dr. O.'s argument is the indefinite phrase under cover of which he would introduce the absolutely *imperative* character of episcopacy as a duty of moral obligation, in obedience to a Divine ordinance. "If episcopacy [he says] be set forth in Scripture, it is the ordinance of God; and the citizens professing Christianity are individually bound to conform to it."†

If it be "*set forth*" in Scripture! How convenient a phrase! and why used? Why not say plainly, If it be *commanded* in Scripture? Obviously, because it is well

* Page 5. [A note in the MS. here indicates that the author intended to insert something corresponding to what may be found on p. 10.—Ed.]

† Page 4.

known that it is not so. And why then should we labour and exert even the utmost ingenuity of sophistry itself to make the commandment broader than it is? Is it not, as it stands, "exceeding broad,"—exactly as it should be, having neither redundancy nor defect? Who then hath required it at *our* hands to add to it, and to narrow the very covenant mercies of the Father of mercies? May there not be danger on this side as well as on the other? And where, at least, there is so much doubtfulness and difference of opinion among confessedly wise and good men, as to either extreme, is not a medium, as before said, the more probable and safer ground?

The very subtile (I say not subtle) and almost imperceptible manner in which Dr. O. would lead his readers, step by step, through the gradations of his argument, from the slenderest premises, is indeed worthy of the "forensic" ingenuity of a special pleader. At a subsequent stage, he takes the ground, *interrogatively*, that "a mere *hint* or *intimation* contained in Scripture, (always excepting what refers to things or circumstances declared to be transient, or such in their nature,) though it have not the force of an express command, is—*sufficiently* binding on every servant of God."* And although at one time he distinctly disallows "that episcopal claims *unchurch* all non-episcopal denominations," and admits that such may be worthy professors of the true religion, accepted of God through the Saviour, and not only not inferior to "*the church*," but even superior to it in both moral and spiritual character, yet in the very next paragraph he assumes that those same "episcopal claims" can be sufficiently proved from Scripture, to make their rejection "*a clear contravention of the word of God*," pp. 6, 7. Now, in the first place, it is denied that there is even any "hint or intimation" in Scripture

that it is "the Divine will" that high-church episcopacy should be, universally and perpetually, the morally obligatory constitution of all Christian churches. And it is affirmed, on the other hand, that there are very many hints and intimations from which the contrary may be most fairly inferred. And, in the second place, the very resort to mere hints and intimations, by a disputant of such ability, and so well read in Scripture, seems a sufficient indication that he was himself conscious of the extreme scantiness of any better Scripture proofs, and consequently of the extreme questionable-ness and narrowness, to say the least, of the foundation on which he would rear his weighty fabric.

In regard to Dr. O.'s illustrations of Scripture hints or illustrations, his interpretation of some is denied, and the appositeness and force of others. He says, for example,—“St. Paul says of the Gentiles, ‘These, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:’ they had not the positive revealed law, yet the light of nature, which only intimates what we ought to do, but does not specifically prescribe it, was ‘a law’ to them, having sufficient obligation to make its suggestions their duty, and to give those suggestions full authority in ‘their conscience:’ and surely the hints recorded by the DEITY in his word are not inferior in obligation to those afforded in his works.”*

Now (1,) by “the law” which the Gentiles had not, Rom. ii, 14, St. Paul evidently meant *the written law*, as contained in the Old Testament, and (2,) he says no such thing as that “the light of nature” “afforded in his works”—the works of Deity—“intimates what we ought to do,” or “was a law to them,”—the Gentiles,—“having sufficient obligation to make its suggestions their duty, and to give those suggestions *full authority* in their conscience.” We deny this whole doctrine. And St. Paul

plainly shows that he meant no such thing, by adding immediately in the next verse, "which show the work of the law *written in their hearts*:"—by the very same hand, doubtless,—for what other hand could do it,—which engraved the commandments on the tables of stone. This was to them, then, a *positive Divine law*,—their authoritative rule of action and of judgment, which they could not slight or violate and be guiltless, or "accepted with God."

As an illustration of his position, Dr. O. says:—"There is no record of a command to observe a Sabbath during the whole antediluvian and patriarchal ages; will it then be alleged that the mere declaration that God 'blessed and sanctified the seventh day' did not sufficiently *imply* that it was the Divine will that the seventh day should be kept holy?"*

Does Dr. O. seriously intend to say, then, that the sanctity of the Sabbath as a Divine institution is not *expressly* contained in the very words of the institution as recorded by the inspired historian? The original Hebrew word שָׁבַת, rendered in our version *sanctified*, (literally, *made holy*,) in the Septuagint is ἡγιασεν, (of the same import.) Buxtorf,—"*sacrari, consecrari, sanctificari, sanctum, sacrum esse vel fieri.*" Leigh's *Critica Sacra*,—"Ab usu communi ad divinum separatus, consecratus," &c. And by Parkhurst (on this place)—"*To set apart, separate, or appropriate to sacred or religious purposes, to sanctify, to consecrate.*"

His second example is from "the rite of sacrifice," respecting which he asks whether "the record of the example of Abel in the antediluvian age, and of those of Noah, Abraham, &c., afterward, were not sufficient *intimations* from God that to offer this sacramental atonement was a duty." The answer to this is, (1,) That without a direct revelation from God of his will in this

respect, there is no reason to believe that the idea of offering animals in sacrifice as a sacramental atonement would ever have entered into the mind of man, or have been his duty : and, (2,) that in the cases of Abel and Noah, the Divine pleasure in this specific, definite thing was explicitly signified : and, (3,) that in the case of Abram it was *explicitly commanded* ; see Gen. xv, 9, &c. ; and the command contained an epitome of that very law of sacrifices afterward more fully revealed through Moses.

His third example is from the creation, for each other, of one man and one woman ; and it is asked if this be not a sufficient intimation that polygamy is contrary to the will of God. With our *present* light this would seem so. And yet this is an unfortunate example for Dr. O.'s theory. For how does he reconcile it with the *practice* of polygamy by some of those who, under that dispensation, stood highest, nevertheless, in the Divine favour?

His fourth is, that " there is no positive command for infant baptism," and yet a sufficiency, " whether as examples or as intimations," to authorize it. In all the arguments for infant baptism we agree, and urge them for the conviction of others. But we think it is also positively commanded, at least as positively as female communion. The command is to disciple all nations, which Dr. O., it is presumed, will agree to be the true import of the original, Matt. xxviii, 19. And as children are a part of all nations, and may be disciplined, they are as clearly embraced in the command as females are in reference to the communion under the term man. And, corresponding with this is the express promise annexed to the ordinance,—“ For the promise is to you and to your children,” Acts ii, 39 : a term embracing their posterity certainly,—but as certainly, in our estimation, their offspring then living.

His fifth is in regard to the change of the day of rest and devotion, from the seventh to the first. Does he

mean to say, then, that the moral obligation consists in the observance of the first day specifically, or of a seventh part of time: in other words, is he of opinion that there are sufficient *hints* in Scripture to constitute the former a Christian law of universal and perpetual obligation, the neglect of which would be sinful, even where the latter,—the seventh day for example,—the laws of any country allowing it, should be sacredly and conscientiously observed?

But if Dr. O.'s rule be a good one, it ought to admit of being carried through: and if it be found to prove too much, it must be allowed to be good for nothing. The objection that monarchy is "set forth" in Scripture, as well as episcopacy, he has answered in a note, pp. 43, 44. But some of the very points made in that answer justify, I think, some other objections, to which I do not perceive how that answer, or any other on his principles, can satisfactorily be applied. He says, for example, that monarchy, being an ordinance of man, might be changed by man; and when the objector urges farther that the Deity himself gave a king to Israel, he answers that it was "in anger." Suppose then we take (1,) the case of a national church—a national ecclesiastical establishment; and, (2,) a corresponding establishment by law of the system of *tithes*. Such, indisputably, were the institutions which Jehovah ordained for his ancient church and people,—and certainly not in anger. And high churchmen, moreover, and Dr. C. especially, very strenuously and boldly insist upon it that "what Aaron and his sons were, bishops and priests now are." If this analogy be a correct one, is it not a pretty strong "intimation" of what ought to follow, and the "hint" that a national establishment and tithes are, agreeable to the Divine will, as clearly "set forth" in Scripture as some others of Dr. O.'s "examples?" In one of his notes, p. 44, he says,—"It has been said that the appointment of a king for *Israel* by the Deity,

is an intimation of the Divine will in favour of royal government, and that therefore that form of civil magistracy must be as binding as episcopacy. We reply, (he continues,) that if such an intimation of the Divine will existed, it would unquestionably be binding on Christians." He then proceeds to show that this was not the fact, because a king was given to them "in anger," in consequence of their perverseness and ambition in insisting on having one. But this reasoning does not at all apply to the national church establishment and tithes, which, according to Dr. O.'s doctrine of intimations and his reasoning upon it, must be binding on Christians, and, consequently, conformity to these intimations cannot be refused, in nations professing Christianity, "*in foro conscientiae, animoque integro.*"

Again: Was it not sufficiently intimated under the Levitical economy, that priests ought not to enter the service of the sanctuary till thirty years of age, and that they ought to be discharged at fifty? Did not our Lord give an example in his own case of not entering on the work of the ministry till thirty years of age; and of washing the disciples' feet? Is there not a sufficient intimation of the Divine approbation of the community of goods in the first Christian church: and in choosing an apostle by *lot*: Paul's circumcising Timothy: the taking of illiterate men from the common occupations of life for apostles and ministers?

Other examples might be adduced, but for the present I shall rest this part of the cause with these.

In order to prove the duty of obedience to wicked and worthless priests and bishops, Dr. O. alleges that saying of our Lord, "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat," &c., Matt. xxiii, 2. It should be observed, however, (1,) That our Lord simply states the fact, "they sit," &c., or rather, they "sat;" for in the Greek the verb is in the past tense. (2,) That they occupied that seat by national authority; and so far obedience was due

to them as a national constitution, and as readers of the law and of the prophets. But that he did not mean to say that those wicked men among them who then occupied it, did so by Divine appointment or with the Divine approbation, or that the people were bound to render them unlimited obedience, is manifest from his own heavy denunciation of them in that same chapter, and elsewhere, as a very generation of vipers, charging them with even making void the law of God through their traditions and teaching, that they shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, and made their proselytes even doubly more the children of hell than themselves. If, therefore, Dr. O. could ever allege Scripture for the mere fact that "bishops," whether by national law, usage, or usurpation, "sit in the apostles' seats" still, if they be such a generation as those scribes and Pharisees were, making their proselytes even doubly more the children of hell than themselves, and making void the law, &c., we should say that they ought to be denounced as our Lord denounced those whited sepulchres of that day, and the people taught to beware of them, and placed as soon as practicable under the guidance of better teachers than those "fools and blind," however learned, &c. But Dr. O. produces no such scripture as that "bishops sit in the apostles' seats."* And for such a "claim"—a claim which asserts for bishops, however wicked and worthless, erroneous in doctrine, and fatally corrupting in morals—the place of infallible guides, as the apostles were, to whom universal, perpetual, implicit obedience is due, no authority short of a direct and positive "thus saith the Lord," can be allowed; nor, indeed, does such a thing seem possible, without imputing sin and contradiction to the Deity himself.

As to Balaam, although he prophesied the truth, though himself "a wicked man," yet Dr. O. certainly

knows who hath said, "*Many* will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, &c., and then will I profess unto them, *I never knew you* ; depart from me," &c., I never appointed, approved, nor acknowledged you as mine.

In regard to the farther plea for the obligation on the people to continue in subjection to wicked priests, and in communion with wicked churches, from the fact that "the sons of Eli, bad as they were, ceased not to be priests," and that "the Israelites at large were often corrupt and idolatrous," yet "never lost their standing as the earthly and visible church, till their dispensation was superseded by that of the Gospel ;"* there are two answers : the first is, that the Jewish institution was of a mixed character, being national and political, as well as ecclesiastical ; and the priests were such by *hereditary descent*, which Dr. O. might just as well allege as a sufficient intimation that it ought to be so still. But the Christian dispensation, being designed for the whole race of man, and to be perpetual, is wholly spiritual, having no connection with any political or national establishment whatever. "My kingdom," said its Founder emphatically, "is not of this world ;" and hence the polity of a Jewish politico-ecclesiastical institution, and the precedents *tolerated* under it, have no binding force whatever, since that dispensation has been totally abolished, and is now "superseded" by another, wholly pure and spiritual.

The second answer is, that Dr. O.'s argument would have been an admirable one for the papal hierarchy at the era of the Reformation, and if it be a just and conclusive one, demonstrates that the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church in this country are *schismatical*, and ought to have continued in communion with "*the Church*" which then was, though all its priests

should even have been as bad as the sons of Eli, and the Church "at large," like the priests, "corrupt," and even "idolatrous:" such seems to me to be the inevitable consequence of Dr. O.'s argument, if a good one; that therefore the champions of Rome ought not to have been "worsted by the extraneous argument" of the glorious reformers, founded on the corruptions, the oppressions, the false doctrines, (like those of the scribes and Pharisees who sat in Moses' seat, making void the commandments of God by their tradition and teaching,) or even the idolatrous character of the Church at large, and the "detestable enormities of its bishops and priests." The argument certainly proves too much for the *Protestant* cause, and, if a conclusive one, ought manifestly to drive us all back to "the Church" from which our predecessors so wickedly separated.

In proceeding to the second department of his essay, "an exhibition of the *Scriptural evidence* relating to this controversy," Dr. O. professes to "begin by stating the precise point at issue." This, he says, is "between two systems only, episcopacy, and parity, or the Presbyterian ministry:"* and by "parity," he states that he means that system which "declares that there is but one order" of men authorized to minister in sacred things. We beg leave to repeat, therefore, that between high church and *us*, this is not the issue. There is a third or middle system, which is that of the Methodist Episcopal polity. This system not only admits but maintains the doctrine of *two orders*, strictly considered, and a third *degree*, or *grade*, officially superior in executive authority and jurisdiction to the body of presbyters out of which and by which it is constituted. To this *officially* superior order, in a more general sense of this term, is committed, according to this system, also the exclusive and actual authority to ordain, the general supervision, whether in a smaller or larger diocese, and

the chief administration of spiritual discipline, besides enjoying all the powers of the other grades. Yet one cannot go so far with Dr. O. as to say, "If we cannot authenticate the claims of the episcopal office, we will surrender those of our deacons, and let all power be confined to the one office of presbyters.*"

So far as *we* are concerned, then, Dr. O.'s statement of the issue is a mere begging of the question. The true issue between him and *us* is, Is ordination by presbyters, in any exigence and under any and all circumstances, wholly incompatible with episcopacy, *in the Scriptural sense* of that *term* or *thing*, and in itself, by God's word, unlawful and void? The affirmative of this question is what Dr. O. has to sustain, if his argument is to have any bearing on us; and, in this view of it, I proceed to an examination of his scripture proofs.

It is proper here to premise, however, and I beg the reader to bear it in mind, that as Dr. O. distinctly admits that there may be true Christian churches without episcopacy, it follows necessarily either that episcopacy is not essential to the validity of ordination to the ministry, or that there may be true Christian churches, (and if some, why not all,) *without any ministers at all*. An argument so incongruous must have some flaw, however ingeniously it may be concealed.

At the outset of this "second department" of his essay, Dr. O. frankly concedes that the name "bishop," in Scripture, is given to presbyters, and that "all that we read in the New Testament concerning 'bishops,' (including of course the words 'overseers' and 'oversight,' which have the same derivation,) is to be regarded as pertaining to that grade," viz., the order of presbyters. "The highest grade he [continues] is there found in those called 'apostles,' and in some other individuals, as Titus, Timothy, and the angels of the seven churches in Asia

* Page 11.—A note in the MS. indicates that it was intended here also to insert from page 10, *ante*.

Minor, who have no official designation given them. It was after the apostolic age [he adds] that the name 'bishop' was taken from the second order and appropriated to the first, as we learn from Theodoret, one of the fathers."*

How is this? After such a preliminary flourish of trumpets, long and loud, about going into *Scripture alone* with the naked question, freed from all extraneous considerations, and exclusively of all other sources of authority or argument, we find ourselves, at the very start, referred to "*Theodoret, one of the fathers!*" What fathers? Peter we know, and Paul we know; but in this issue, as offered by Dr. O. himself, who is Theodoret? Whatever he may be elsewhere, he is an intruder here, and cannot be suffered to say one word, good or bad, on either side.

In his note on the same place, Dr. O. refers to "*Videli*" also, in support of the same position. We protest against his admission also, whether he be episcopal or non-episcopal. We demand a clear field; the field chosen, proposed by Dr. O. himself—the *Scripture alone*: and if he find not there sufficient for his purpose, without aid, direct or incidental, from any other quarter whatever, his only alternative is to give up the contest. The very fact of his flying off to such "*extraneous aid*," is sufficient indication that he was sensible of the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of connecting his chain without it. He must assume something, or go *out of Scripture*, or inevitably fail, as we believe, to make out his case.

This course on the part of Dr. O. is the more surprising, as he himself had previously said of certain uninspired authorities referred to, "We reject, therefore, this whole extraneous appendage of the controversy before us;" and then adds, "that the rule applies to the *fathers*, as much as to later ornaments of the church."† Is it

* Page 12.

† Pages 8, 9.

not passing strange, then, that within a few pages afterward, he should himself attempt to avail himself of the authority of one of those very fathers—nay, a father of the *fifth* century, and a *prelate* too!

No evidence then of any thing that was “taken from” the order of presbyters, “after the apostolic age,” whether in name or otherwise, can be admitted in the argument before us. This would be to travel out of the Scripture record; and by that record alone this cause must be tried.

Again: Within a few sentences afterward, Dr. O. says, “The original meaning of bishop was only a presbyter, but the name passed from that middle grade to the highest.”* Here again we must stop him, unpleasant and inconvenient as it may be. There is no such evidence in the record, and he *must not travel out of it*. His assumption, or mere gratuitous assertion, (for the statement amounts to nothing more,) can no more be allowed, under this issue, than the evidence of Theodoret.

The *name* “bishop,” then, being given up by Dr. O. as meaning, in Scripture, no higher order than presbyter, his next resort is, to see “if we can find the *thing* sought, i. e., an office higher than that of presbyters or elders.”†

If this be “the thing sought,” there neither is nor can be any controversy on the subject. That there are in the New Testament higher offices mentioned than that of mere presbyters or bishops, I presume no one can think of questioning. But, unfortunately for Dr. O.’s system, his argument again proves too much. If one higher office can be proved by it, most assuredly several can; and consequently, on this basis, more than three orders must necessarily be admitted. For example, to repeat a passage above quoted from Dr. O., in which he says, “the highest grade is there found [in the New

* Page 12.

† Ibid.

Testament] in those called apostles, *and in some other individuals*, as Titus, Timothy," &c. Now (to say nothing at present of the angels of the Asiatic churches, about whom the Scriptures give us so little information) does any unsophisticated reader of the New Testament, who has no system or purposes of party to serve, believe that any "other individuals" exercised the same office that the apostles did? Rejecting all regard to mere *names*, and looking at *things* and *facts*, can any thing be plainer than that the offices of Titus and Timothy, for instance, (as Dr. O. names these particularly) were inferior to that of Paul? Thus much on this point here, by the way. It will be resumed hereafter.

In another place, Dr. O. says of the word "bishop;" "In Scripture, it means a presbyter, properly so called; out of Scripture, according to the usage next to universal of all ages since the sacred canon was closed, it means"*—Dear sir, you must be pleased to excuse us for interrupting you so frequently—no "usage," any more than other testimony "out of Scripture" has any place here, and you cannot be allowed to introduce it: you yourself have given the challenge to test this question by *Scripture alone*, and to that you must confine yourself, or acknowledge yourself "worsted."

As to the "fact of the existence of episcopacy" in Scripture,—that is to say, that there was, in the apostolical age, an official oversight both of churches and ministers, with *us* there is no dispute. We admit, and maintain, as fully as Dr. O. does or can, that the apostles, in common, did exercise such an oversight—an itinerant general superintendency over the whole church, which was an itinerant general episcopacy in *fact*; and that others under them did exercise a subordinate oversight by their appointment and direction; this we grant with all readiness and pleasure, as we shall do whatever *does* appear in the Scripture, lead us

where it may. We agree, moreover, that it is a fair inference from this fact, that an official itinerant general oversight, both of churches and ministers, is *agreeable* to the *apostolical practice*. But that the office and authority of the apostolate itself have been transmitted, by divine appointment, to any order of men since the apostles, we affirm to be a mere assumption, unsupported by any thing in Scripture, or that can be logically inferred from it.

Dr. O. takes great pains to prove, what I apprehend no one denies, that there was originally a sacred office, viz., that of the *apostles*, superior to that of elders or presbyters; "and this [he adds] is substantiating nearly the whole episcopal claim."*

Is it possible, then, that this is the amount of what Dr. O. has been labouring through sixteen pages to accomplish? Why, if he had simply stated this proposition at the outset, it would, I presume, have been universally admitted; at least it certainly would by *us*. And yet it is so far from "substantiating nearly the whole episcopal claim," of those who arrogantly assert that they occupy now, by divine right and title, the identical office which the apostles did while on earth in the age of inspiration, that it is not even a single hair's breadth advance toward it. So far as *Scripture testimony alone* is concerned, (and in the argument *now* before us nothing else can be admitted,) the theory that those now called bishops are successors, by divine appointment, to the apostolate itself, as it was held and exercised by the apostles personally in their lifetime, under a direct commission from the Lord Jesus in person, is a mere bare-faced hypothesis, an utterly gratuitous assumption, against taking which for granted "all sound reasoning protests." That the establishment of this high "episcopal claim," on the part of himself and others, is, however, absolutely essential to Dr. O.'s argument, if he do

not mean to trifle with his readers, is perfectly manifest: and yet how is he to make it out from *Scripture*, and *Scripture alone*? To any one acquainted with *Scripture* is it not as plain as the brightest shining of the mid-day sun, that it is impossible to do it? and that Dr. O. has therefore undertaken an absolutely impossible task?

In preparing for the above conclusion, Dr. O. seems solicitous to enlarge the original college of apostles by embracing within it several, who, strictly speaking, in regard to the *thing*, the primary apostolate, distinctively understood, have no title to be placed in that rank. In a former part of his essay, indeed, when it seemed subservient to *his* purpose, he was careful and ready enough to insist that “irregularity in titles and designations is of so frequent occurrence, yet occasions so little actual confusion, that it ought not to be viewed as a real difficulty in the case before us.*” Exactly so, say we, in the present instance. It is the *thing* we seek,—the proper, distinctive, original apostolate,—not the mere *name* apostle,—which Dr. O. undoubtedly knows is variously used in *Scripture*, and sometimes in its simple etymological sense, to signify a mere *messenger* on any occasion or mission whatever. Thus St. Paul says to the Philippians, (ii, 25,) that Epaphroditus, their *messenger*, [Gr. *Αποστολον*, apostle,] had ministered to his wants. Examples need not be multiplied; as it is believed that no intelligent and candid reader of the New Testament, both in the Greek and English, will dispute that this term is sometimes used there in its lower, common sense. Yet, as Dr. O. himself well remarks of some other *names*, “this confusion is but apparent, there is no real or practical difficulty” in the case; a familiar acquaintance with the *Scriptures*, with even a moderate degree of attention and care, will enable almost any reader to distinguish readily the proper

apostolical office, in its highest distinctive sense, independently of mere *names*.

When Dr. O. argues, therefore, that "the apostles were not thus distinguished because they were appointed by Christ personally; for some are named 'apostles' in Scripture who were not thus appointed, as Matthias, Barnabas, and probably James the brother of the Lord, all ordained by merely human ordainers: Silvanus also, and Timothy, and besides Andronicus and Junia others could be added," he evidently violates the just principle by which he wishes to restrict opponents, and argues from the mere *name*, without due regard to the proper distinctions of *things*.

With regard to Matthias, in what manner Dr. O. would make out that he was not appointed by Christ personally, but was "ordained by merely human ordainers," does not appear. He gives us barely his own assertion for it; which cannot be admitted as *Scripture evidence*. The testimony of that record, on the contrary, is, that previously to the day of Pentecost, when the vacancy in the apostolate occasioned by the apostasy and death of Judas was to be filled, Peter stood up, and after an introductory statement, said, "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles,"*

* Acts i, 21-26.

The word "ordained," in the 22d verse of the above passage, may possibly mislead such readers as are not able to examine the passage in the original Greek. Such as are able to do so, however, will be convinced, I am persuaded, by a moment's inspection, that there is no word there in the Greek which can with any propriety be rendered "ordained," in the present ordinary acceptation of the term. The words in the Greek, as constructively connected in the 21st and 22d verses, are *Δει γενεσθαι*,—*must be*. That any ecclesiastical rite, "by mere human ordainers," such as imposition of hands, &c., was used on that occasion in the appointment of Matthias to fill the vacancy in the apostolate, there is not one single particle of evidence. On the contrary, after Peter's express mention of the Lord Jesus in a preceding verse, the inspired record continues, "And they prayed and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all, show whether of these two THOU *hast chosen*, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, . . . and they gave forth their lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles:"—obviously (if we take this record alone for our guide, as in this argument we must,) without any farther ceremony, or the interposition of any "mere human ordainers" about it. The case was referred, for that peculiar extraordinary office, to the direct personal appointment of the Lord Jesus himself. This Matthias had, in common with the other eleven who then composed the apostolic college. That it was signified by "the lot" does not at all alter the case; for whatever was the specific mode of that lot, of which the record does not inform us, it is plain on the face of the account that the apostles referred its result to the infallible decision of the Lord himself; and that *they believed* that HE HIMSELF did so decide that result; and therefore, without another word

or farther act on the subject, according to the record, Matthias "was numbered with the eleven apostles."

Should Dr. O., however, persist in insisting that Matthias was ordained to the apostolate "by mere human ordainers," it seems to me that he will inevitably involve himself in the heresy of *lay* ordination, even to the very highest ecclesiastical office. For let any plain, unbiased reader carefully examine the whole account, and we will cheerfully submit it to his judgment whether, whatever of mere human agency there was in the ordination of Matthias to that office, it was not, so far as the record gives us any information, participated in by the whole of the one hundred and twenty disciples.

In regard to Barnabas, there is by no means clear evidence that he was an apostle, in the highest sense of this term, as the twelve and Paul were. The contrary opinion is held by eminent critics, and seems the more probable one. From a case so doubtful, therefore, nothing can be inferred with certainty. The manner in which Dr. O. himself says, "probably James the brother of the Lord," shows his own uncertainty as to the identity of this person, or the propriety of placing him in this class; and it will therefore be as useless as it is unnecessary to discuss the question respecting him, on which the most eminent critics are so much at variance.

But why need I go through the list, since Dr. O. obviously takes advantage merely of the *name* without regard to the *thing* implied in the apostolical office in its distinctive and highest sense. As to Andronicus and Junia, it is very doubtful whether they were ever *named* apostles in any sense. Rom. xvi, 7, is, to say the least, a very doubtful passage as to that point. Junia may even have been the name of a *woman*, the wife of Andronicus, for συγγενεις, rendered *kinsmen* in our version, signifies *relatives* in general, whether male or female. And that they were "of note among the apostles," most

probably means nothing more than that they were highly esteemed by them.

Silas was a chief man "among the brethren," and "a faithful brother," as Peter supposed.* And that Timothy was subject to the directions of St. Paul, and officially inferior to him, is too plain to be disputed. To attempt, therefore, as Dr. O. does, to class among "apostles," distinctively and properly so called, persons whom he alleges to have been "ordained by mere human ordainers," for the sake of establishing the position that those now called bishops occupy by divine right the same office, is to exalt the episcopate at the expense of the apostolate, and thereby, just in the same proportion as this is done, to diminish the credit and the authority of Christianity itself.

The following observations on this subject from the pen of Dr. Campbell, are so much in point that I submit them entire to the consideration of the reader.—

"Many, indeed, convinced . . . that it is in vain to search for the office of bishop, as the word is understood by moderns, in those ministers ordained by the apostles in the churches which they founded, have referred us for its origin to the apostolate itself. I have passingly observed already that this was one of those extraordinary offices which were in their nature temporary, and did not admit succession. But this point, as so much stress is laid upon it, will deserve to be examined more particularly.

"The apostles may be considered in a twofold view,—either in their general character as the first pastors of the church and teachers of the Christian faith, or in what is implied in their special character of apostles of Jesus Christ. In the first general view they are doubtless the predecessors of all those who, to the end of the world, shall preach the same gospel and administer the same sacraments, by whatever name we distinguish them, bishops, priests, or deacons,—overseers, elders,

or ministers. But the question still recurs, whether, agreeably to the primitive institution, their successors, in respect of the more common character of teachers and directors of the churches, should be divided into three orders or only into two? To presume, without evidence, that the first and not the second was the fact, is merely what logicians call a *petitio principii*, taking that for granted which is the very point in dispute. But if it be alleged, that not in the general character of teachers, but in their special function as apostles, the bishops are their proper successors, the presbyters and deacons being only the successors of those who were in the beginning ordained by the apostles, this point will require a separate discussion. And for this purpose your attention is entreated to the following remarks.

“First, the indispensable requisites in an apostle sufficiently demonstrate that the office could be but temporary. It was necessary that he should be one who had seen Jesus Christ in the flesh after his resurrection. Accordingly they were all especially destined to serve as eye-witnesses to this world of this great event, the hinge on which the truth of Christianity depended. The character of apostle is briefly described by Peter, who was himself the first of the apostolical college, as one ordained to be a witness of Christ’s resurrection, Acts i, 22; a circumstance of which he often makes mention in his speeches, both to the rulers and to the people. See Acts ii, 32; iii, 15; v, 32; x, 41; xiii, 31. And if so, the office, from its nature and design, could not have an existence after the extinction of that generation.

“Secondly, the apostles were distinguished by prerogatives which did not descend to any after them. Of this kind was, first, their receiving their mission immediately from the Lord Jesus Christ, not mediately through any human ordination or appointment: of this kind, also, ~~was~~, secondly, the power of conferring, by imposition of

hands, the miraculous gifts of the Spirit on whomsoever they would ; and, thirdly, the knowledge they had, by inspiration, of the whole doctrine of Christ. It was for this reason they were commanded to wait the fulfilment of the promise which their Master had given them, that they should be baptized with the Holy Ghost. What pains does not Paul take to show that the above-mentioned marks of an apostle belonged to him as well as to any of them ! That he had seen Christ after his resurrection, and was consequently qualified, as an eyewitness, to attest that memorable event, he observes, 1 Cor. ix, 1 ; xv, 8 ; that his commission came directly from Jesus Christ and God the Father, without the intervention of any human creature, he acquaints us, Gal. i, 1 ; ii, 6. To his conferring miraculous powers as the signs of an apostle, he alludes, 2 Cor. xii, 12 ; and that he received the knowledge of the gospel, not from any other apostle, but by immediate inspiration, Gal. i, 11, &c.

“ Thirdly, their mission was of quite a different kind from that of any ordinary pastor. It was to propagate the gospel throughout the world, both among Jews and Pagans, and not to take charge of a particular flock. The terms of their commission are, ‘ Go and teach all nations ;’ again, ‘ Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.’ No doubt they may be styled bishops or overseers, but in a sense very different from that in which it is applied to the inspector over the inhabitants of a particular district. They were universal bishops ; the whole church, or rather the whole earth, was their charge, and they were all colleagues one of another. Or, to give the same sentiment in the words of Chrysostom, *Εἰσιν ὑπο θεου χειροτονηθεντες αποστολοι αρχοντες, ουκ εθνη και πολεις διαφορους λαμβανοντες, αλλα παντες κοινη την οικουμενην εμπιστευθεντες.* ‘ The apostles were constituted of God rulers, not each over a separate nation or city, but all were intrusted with the world in common.’ If so,

to have limited themselves to any thing less would have been disobedience to the express command they had received from their Master, to go into all nations, and to preach the gospel to every creature. If, in the latter part of the lives of any of them, they were, through age and infirmities, confined to one place, that place would naturally fall under the immediate inspection of such. And this, if even so much as this, is all that has given rise to the tradition (for there is nothing like historical evidence in the case) that any of them were bishops or pastors of particular churches. Nay, in some instances it is plain that the tradition has originated from this single circumstance, that the first pastors in such a church were appointed by such an apostle. Hence it has arisen that the bishops of different churches have claimed (and probably with equal truth) to be the successors of the same apostle.

“Fourthly, and lastly. As a full proof that the matter was thus universally understood, both in their own age and in the times immediately succeeding, no one on the death of an apostle was ever substituted in his room; and when that original sacred college was extinct, the title became extinct with it. The election of Matthias by the apostles, in the room of Judas, is no exception, as it was previous to their entering on their charge. They knew it was their Master’s intention that twelve missionaries, from among those who had attended his ministry on earth, should be employed as ocular witnesses to attest his resurrection, on which the divinity of his religion depended. The words of Peter on this occasion are an ample confirmation of all that has been said, both in regard to the end of the office and the qualifications requisite in the person who fills it, at the same time that they afford a demonstration of the absurdity as well as arrogance of modern pretenders.— ‘Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out

among us, beginning from the baptism of John unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.' But afterward, when the apostle James, the brother of John, was put to death by Herod, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, we find no mention made of a successor. Nor did the subsequent admission of Paul and Barnabas to the apostleship form any exception to what has been advanced ; for they came not as successors to any one, but were especially called by the Holy Spirit as apostles, particularly to the Gentiles ; and in them, also, were found the qualifications requisite for the testimony which, as apostles, they were to give."*

The remark of Dr. O. that "neither were the apostles thus distinguished because they had seen our Lord after his resurrection, for five hundred brethren saw him,"† is a very singular one. Certainly, it was never meant that all who had thus seen him were therefore apostles, but that none could be apostles who had not thus seen him.

Again : he says, "And though the twelve apostles were selected as special witnesses of the resurrection, yet others received that appellation who were not thus selected, as Timothy, Silvanus, Andronicus, Junia, &c.,"‡ received *that appellation* ! True ; as to some at least of those named. But the mere "appellation" is not the *thing* we seek : and why does Dr. O. thus continue to endeavour to press into his service a mere *name*, against the principle by which he wishes to restrict his opponents. The Saviour himself is styled in Scripture "the apostle" of our profession : and from his receiving this "appellation," it would seem, according to Dr. O.'s use of this name in the argument, that, of course, He, and Andronicus, and *Junia* were of the same order, and held identically the same office.

* Page 75-78.

† Page 15.

‡ Ibid.

“Nor were the apostles [he continues] thus distinguished because of their power of working miracles ; for Stephen and Philip, who were both deacons, are known to have had this power.”* But the apostles had also the farther power of conferring the same gift on others.

But why does Dr. O. *separate* the characteristics assigned as distinctive of the apostolate ? No one pretends that *any one* of the grounds he names was the sole ground of distinction, as his mode of arguing implies ; but that there was a *combination* of the signs of an apostle, to be found in those to whom [the] appellation was appropriate in its highest distinctive sense, and in none else. When, therefore, he adds, “It follows, therefore, or will not at least be questioned, that the apostles were distinguished from the elders because they were *superior* to them in ministerial power and rights,”†—if he means, as it would seem he does, that that single circumstance was the whole and sole ground of their entire and peculiar distinction, it is not only “questioned,” but flatly denied. If, indeed, this notion of Dr. O.’s be correct, and the matter was so understood by St. Paul and the Corinthian church in his day, is it not surprising that, instead of the course he took to convince them of the legitimacy of his claim to the apostleship, it did not occur to him to say, “Am not I superior to an elder, and therefore, of course, an apostle ?”

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* Page 15.

† Ibid.

APPENDIX.

[The remarks embraced in this Appendix appear to have been written separately by the author, with a view of incorporating them afterward in their appropriate places in the Essay. They are added here, because the editor desires to present the subject just as it was left by the author, imperfect as it may be.—*Ed.*]

I.

The confidence with which Dr. Cooke, though so recent a convert to this high notion, undertakes to unchurch, as it is termed, all those denominations who deny the necessity or the existence, in lineal descent, of the three ministerial orders which he describes as essentially distinct by divine right, may justify a brief inquiry here into the just and Scriptural import of the term “church.”

The term itself, as well in the Scriptures and in the writings of the ancient Christian authors as in modern use, has different significations, according to the subject to which it is applied. The Greek word generally rendered church in the New Testament is *ἐκκλησία*, and signifies either (1,) any civil assemblage of people, lawful or unlawful; or, (2,) when used in reference to the disciples of Christ, the whole Christian community throughout the world; or, (3,) the Christian community in any particular place,—as the church of Jerusalem, of Antioch, &c. It has been supposed also by some, in a few passages of Scripture, to signify the place where any Christian society or congregation assembled,—though other able critics doubt this. There are other accommodated significations of the term, which need not be here specified. But it may not be amiss to mention that this term is never used in the New Testament in the singular number in reference to Christians, unless when either the church universal is meant, or some particular church in a single place. When more than one particular church is intended, but less than the whole, the plural form of the word is always adopted;—as the churches of Galatia, of Asia, of Macedonia, &c. A national, provincial, or diocesan church, in the singular, as the term is now used, is an application of it altogether unknown in the New Testament, or in the Christian writers of the first two centuries, with the exception of two passages in the epistles attributed to Ignatius, which will be hereafter mentioned. In conformity with this statement, one bishop, in the most ancient usage, was uniformly considered as having charge of only one *ἐκκλησία*, one church, in the singular; the extent of which was designated by the Greek word *παροικία*, in Latin *parochia*, or *paroecia*, which answers to the English word *parish*, and means strictly and properly a *neighbourhood*. His charge was never denominated in those early days *διοκησις*, a *diocese*. This term was not used for this purpose till after the lapse of some centuries, when the bishop's charge had become so far extended as to embrace within it many churches and parishes.

In relation to this subject, Dr. C. has some singular criticisms on the extent of the church of Jerusalem in the apostolic age, of which I am here reminded.—“In Jerusalem,” he says, “there were three thousand persons added to the church on the first day the gospel was publicly preached, after the ascent of our Lord: and when Paul went there from Ephesus there was an innumerable company of Christians. When he went, on his arrival, to see James, all the presbyters being present, they said unto him, Thou seest how many TENS OF THOUSANDS of Jews there are which believe. The words in our translation are, *thou seest how many THOUSANDS*: but in the original it is *muriades, myriads, tens of thousands* :” p. 154. Afterward, p. 156, assuming as proved what he had before asserted, viz., that these “many myriads,”—even “*an innumerable company*” of Christians, belonged at that early period to the church in Jerusalem alone,—he adds, “*How many tens of thousands of believers there were in Jerusalem when Paul went there we cannot exactly say, but it is indisputable that there were many; let us suppose four only.*” That is to say, *forty thousand ONLY*, as a moderate calculation, then statedly belonging to the church of Jerusalem alone; for that this is his meaning I take to be plain from the introduction to his criticisms, section 394.

But did not the doctor forget that “the multitude” from among whom the three thousand were converted on the day of Pentecost was composed of “Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes, and Arabians?” Accordingly, when Peter addressed them, he said, “Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem,—more strictly (*οἱ κατοικοῦντες*) that *sojourn* at Jerusalem,—for a large portion of the hearers, as the context demonstrates, were not inhabitants of *Judea* itself, much less of the city alone. They were the strangers mentioned in verses 9, 10, 11, who had come to the feast from the numerous and widely scattered countries there specified. Is it reasonable then to suppose that the entire number of the converts was from among the inhabitants of *the city* itself; or that all the converted sojourners continued there afterward, as permanent members of the church of Jerusalem? This is to me, at least, a new idea.

He seems to have forgotten, also, that when Paul visited Jerusalem, as stated in the other passage which he cites, (Acts xxi,) it was again during the feast of Pentecost, (as is proved by Acts xx, 16,) on which occasion it is well known that a vast concourse of Jews from all quarters, Christians as well as others, who were then still “all zealous of the law,” (v. 29,) resorted to Jerusalem, and, consequently, that the “many myriads” here spoken of can by no principle of rational interpretation be confined to the Jewish believers who were stated inhabitants of Jerusalem alone, but must be understood to include those also who came to the feast from the most distant and various places. Indeed the passage Acts xxi, 20, seems to me in all fairness and propriety of construction to include not merely the Jewish believers then present at the feast, from whatever place, but all the Christian believers of that class wherever scattered, who, whether present or not, would undoubtedly hear, through those who were present, of the conduct of Paul; against whom very many of them were already greatly prejudiced.

In proof that Dr. C. means that there were at that early period so many myriads of Jewish believers inhabitants of Jerusalem, who statedly attended Christian worship there, I need only cite in addition the minute calculation he makes of the size of a building that would contain “forty thousand per-

sons" "in such a parish as Jerusalem," besides "the crowds of unbelievers who continually attended the preaching of the gospel," p. 156.

This mode of managing the subject reminds me of an argument of Dr. C.'s in another place, viz., in that long chain by which he undertakes to establish the episcopate of Timothy at Ephesus. One of the links is, that "only five days elapsed from the time of leaving Troas until the day the elders left Ephesus to go to Miletus, to see Paul." But how is this proved? Why simply thus:—the distances between certain places are first judged from the map, and it is then presumed,—*in a voyage at sea*, and in the state of navigation at that period,—that equal distances are sailed in equal times, and that for this notable reason, "the general course being the same, and *therefore the wind equally favourable*," p. 37. Now had this been a *steamboat* excursion, there might be some tolerable ground for the calculation,—bating accidents. But how "the general course being the same," in a sailboat voyage in the Mediterranean some eighteen hundred years ago, supports the positive conclusion that "*therefore the wind was equally favourable*" for four days successively, I know not. May it not possibly have fallen calm after three days? or have blown less freshly? or veered more unfavourably? or even shifted dead a-head? Does not the merest fresh-water man know that a distance which in some circumstances may be sailed in a day, in others may require a week, or even a month? At least one would think this "therefore," in Dr. C.'s argument, hardly sufficient for one who "had always been in the habit of requiring strong evidence upon every subject, and never yielding assent to any thing" without it; and certainly, rather too weak to constitute any part of a foundation for such a system as he labours to build upon it. Although, allowing such criticisms and arguments to pass, with what facility *systems may* be reared, it is not difficult to understand.

II.

The vexed question respecting the original form of government in the Christian church, though not unimportant, is certainly of no such consequence as heated disputants on any side, misled by party prejudices or intemperate zeal, would affect to make it. The declaration of St. Paul that "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," is applicable alike to every thing external and circumstantial; and it may be confidently added, as the apostle continues, "for he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God and approved of men."

But it may be said, perhaps, that this is begging the question; for the ultra high-church, and Dr. C. among the most forward of that class, in bold, bigoted, often repeated, and extravagant assertions, contends that the form of polity is not a thing external or circumstantial, but of the very essence of a true church. And although no one has ever yet produced, or can produce, a single passage of Scripture which plainly teaches this doctrine,—a thing most marvellous indeed if the doctrine be true; yet it is urged upon us over and over that *Ignatius* said so, a venerable bishop, father, and martyr, and that we ought to believe him,—especially as his testimony was confirmed too, as Dr. C. asserts, by both Polycarp and Irenæus, also venerable fathers, thus making their testimony identical with his; an assertion which shall be examined hereafter. Now, in the first place, we do not believe that Igna-

tius ever did say so ; but that some forger of a later age, and of Dr. C.'s sentiments, said it for him. And in the second place, if he even did say it, —yet if he or an angel from heaven taught any doctrine different from or inconsistent with the gospel as contained in the New Testament, we would not believe. That Scripture and tradition combined are the source of faith, is the doctrine of Rome, not of Protestants. The doctrine of Protestants is, that the Bible alone is not only the rule, but a sufficient rule, both of faith and practice. Whatever cannot be proved from this, without reference to any other book, or to any tradition, or human authority whatever, Protestants never can consistently receive as an article of faith. And if Dr. C. cannot prove without going out of Scripture, that “there is no church” without the three orders of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, as essentially distinct and essentially necessary by Divine appointment ; then his argument, Dr. Onderdonk being judge, is not “worth taking into account.”

Now, that no such thing can be proved *from Scripture*, many of the very ablest writers on the Episcopal side have over and over admitted. The celebrated Dodwell, the very champion of the highest order of high-church, in the case of the nonjuring bishops in the reign of William III., concedes that all the reasoning from which men conclude that the whole model of ecclesiastical discipline may be extracted from the writings of the New Testament is quite precarious ; that there is no passage of any sacred writer which openly professes this design ; that there is not one which so treats of ecclesiastical government as if the writer or the writer's author, the Holy Spirit, had intended to describe any one form of polity as being to remain everywhere and for ever inviolate ; that the sacred penmen have nowhere declared with sufficient clearness how great a change must take place in church government, when the churches should first withdraw from the communion of the synagogues ; that they nowhere clearly enough show how much was allowed to the personal gifts of the Holy Ghost, and how much also to places and offices ; that they nowhere with sufficient accuracy distinguish the extraordinary officers who were [not] to outlive that age, from the ordinary who were not to cease till the second coming of Christ ; that all the things then generally known they also suppose known, and never for the sake of posterity explain, minding only the state wherein things were at the time ; that they nowhere professedly describe the ministries themselves, so as to explain either their nature or their extent ; which was surely indispensable if they meant to settle a model in perpetuity.*

If all this be so, as every one who reads the Bible can see for himself, “What can we conclude,” adds Dr. Campbell, “but that it was intended by the Holy Spirit thus to teach us to distinguish between what is essential to the Christian religion, [and to a true church,] and what is comparatively circumstantial, regarding external order and discipline, which, as matters of expedience, alter with circumstances, and are therefore left to the adjustment of human prudence ? What can better account for the difference remarked by Hoornebeck, that the apostles were more solicitous about the virtues than the degrees of the ministers, and more strenuous in inculcating the manners to be observed by them as suitable to their office, and conducing to their usefulness, than copious in describing the form of their government ?

* I give the entire passage as rendered by Dr. George Campbell, Lect. on Eccles. Hist., pp. 52, 53 ; where the original Latin of Dodwell may also be seen. And I take pleasure in making a general acknowledgment here, that to Dr. Campbell, one of the ablest and most candid critics that I have yet seen on this subject, I am much indebted in various parts of this treatise.

The one is essential, the other only circumstantial ; the one invariable, the other not."

If the very existence of a church, and the validity of the ministry and ordinances of the gospel, be essentially dependant on the doctrine maintained by Dr. Cooke, might we not most reasonably expect to find it so plainly revealed in Scripture that he who runs may read ? How else can the perfection of Scripture be asserted ? that it is of itself able to make us wise unto salvation,—that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work ? And if, moreover, it be alleged to be in Scripture, yet so that even its advocates cannot make it out, confessedly, but by such a precarious chain of far-fetched and subtile deductions as those of Dr. Onderdonk ; and still more, if, before the chain can possibly be completed, the profound researches of antiquaries, critics, and linguists into the contradictory, the doubtful, and the disputed volumes of the fathers have to be resorted to, does not this of itself afford a strong presumption against it ? How, then, may it be said, "*I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, but hast revealed them unto babes ?*"

According to the doctrine of high-church, when our Lord charged his disciples to "beware of false prophets," he ought to have established a very different criterion by which to judge them. He ought to have taught us how to trace their spiritual pedigree ; and how to ascertain whether the pretenders be lineally descended from an apostle or an apostolical bishop, through an unbroken series of prelatical ordinations. Do we find any thing of this sort in Scripture ? Is any such thing even intimated or hinted ? On the contrary, does not our Lord establish a test entirely different ? one of plain, common, and universal application ? one suited to the "poor" and ignorant, for whom the gospel with all its immunities and ordinances was specially designed, as well as for the learned. "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles ? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit ; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them," Matt. vii, 16, 17, 18, 20.

I know that ultra high-churchmen, and Dr. C. among them, dispute the sufficiency of this test, and attempt a course of argument to disprove it. But then their controversy is with the Master, who expressly affirms and establishes it. And whether we ought to believe him or them, the reader must judge. According to them, Alexander VI., of Rome, and other similar worthies, indispensable links in their chain of succession, were true ministers of Christ, true Christian bishops by Divine appointment, while Francis Asbury, Adam Clarke, Richard Watson, and the brightest luminaries, living or dead, in the Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, or Methodist churches, must be held as intruders into the sacred office, and no ministers of Christ. Be it so, by their test. But try them all by the test of Christ, and what will be the result ? Surely a writer must calculate largely on the ignorance or the superstition of his readers to talk of establishing such a theory as Dr. C.'s at the present day.

When our blessed Lord, after his resurrection, and just before his ascension, commissioned his apostles to go into all the world, &c., he added, "and lo ! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." This promise, we are often told, descends to all the true successors of the apostles in the gospel ministry, and to none else. It is granted ; and by this test

also we are willing to be tried. The personal presence of Christ in the flesh, or his presence in miraculous gifts and works, I suppose is not now pretended by any Protestants. It remains then that the promise is to be understood of his spiritual presence in the personal support and comfort of his ministers, and in giving sanction and success to their efforts for the conversion and salvation of sinful men by the demonstrations of his Spirit.—Are the prelatical monopolizers of the covenant mercies of God, and the presence of Christ, willing that plain people should try their exclusive claims by this test?*

"Master," said one of the yet imperfectly instructed apostles to Jesus, "we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbade him, because he followeth not us." Jesus answered, "Forbid him not, for there is no man who shall do a miracle in my name that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is for us." That contracted spirit of exclusionism which regards the party, the cause of the sect, more than the cause of Christ, is not yet extinct. Let him that readeth understand.

St. John says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." But how are we to try them?—by a learned and critical investigation of the truth of their claim to an uninterrupted lineal descent from the apostles, through a long line of baptisms and ordinations of a specific character? Do the Scriptures anywhere lay down such a test, or anywhere intimate that such should ever be adopted? "To the law and to the testimony" then. "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." This was the legitimate test under the ancient as well as the present dispensation. A very different one is now deemed requisite by some zealous patronizers of an exclusive hierarchy, Popish or Protestant.

That any specific form of church government, or mode of authenticating ministers, is not essential to the being of a church, or to the validity of the Christian ministry and ordinances, I take to be plainly the doctrine of the Church of England, if her 23d article be not framed in language designedly ambiguous and deceptive, which ought not to be supposed. That article entitled, *Of Ministering in the Congregation*, says, "Those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent, which be chosen and called to this work by men who have public authority given unto them in the congregation to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard." This, says Dr. Campbell, if it mean any thing, and be not a mere identical proposition, of which he owns it has some appearance, refers us ultimately to that authority, however modelled, which satisfies the people, and is settled among them.

The Episcopal Reformed Church of Scotland, the predecessors of the high-church nonjurors in that country, in their 19th article, entitled, *Of the Notes of the true Kirk*, affirmed that "they [the notes or marks of the

* It is related of the late venerable Dr. Pilmoor, of Philadelphia, that, after he had become a minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church, he was in a large mixed company, among whom were some of his old friends of the Methodist Episcopal Church, rather tauntingly indulging himself in self-gratulation on the above-cited promise of Christ's presence with his ministers of the regular apostolical succession, of which he had now the happiness to be one. An old friend, who had often heard him preach in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, when he was a plain Methodist preacher, said to him:—"Dr. P., permit me to ask you one question, as a candid Christian man. When I heard you, as a Methodist preacher, preach to the multitude on the race-ground, the judges' stand being your pulpit, was Christ with you or not?" The doctor paused, and then emphatically answered, "Yes, if ever he has been with me, he was with me then." His old friend was satisfied, and so were the company. It was the candid confession of a plain, honest man,—which plain, honest men knew how to appreciate.

true church] are neither antiquity, title usurped, *lineal descent*, place appointed, nor multitude of men approving an error." Again, article 23d, *Of the right Administration of the Sacraments* :—"that sacraments be rightly ministrate, we judge two things requisite : the one that they be ministrate by lawful ministers, whom we affirm to be only they that are appointed to the preaching of the word, they being men lawfully chosen thereto by some kirk, &c. We fly the doctrine of the papistical kirk in participation of their sacraments,—1st, Because their ministers are no ministers of Christ Jesus," &c. Here, continues Dr. Campbell, not only is *lineal descent* expressly excluded, but its very channel is removed, as the Popish clergy are declared (he thinks with too little ceremony and too universally) to be no ministers of Christ. Nay, all that appears externally necessary, according to that episcopal formulary, to constitute a minister, is the choice of some congregation. Far from believing one particular form of ecclesiastical polity to be sacred and inviolable, they say, Art. 21, *Of General Councils*, &c., "Not that we think any policy and any order of ceremonies can be appointed for all ages, times, and places."

Dr. Cooke is careful frequently to remind us that some of the ancient authors on whom he relies were martyrs. Is nothing due then to the testimony of the venerable martyrs of that mother church from which his own recently adopted communion claims birth? What was the language of Rogers, who, though with a wife and ten children, whom he was not even suffered to see, refused a pardon at the stake from those successors of the apostles and vicegerents of Christ, the then bishops of England? What was the language of Bishop Hooper, whom the popish bishops, Christ's true and supreme ministers by Divine appointment, according to Dr. C., brought also to the stake? and who was used so barbarously in the fire, that his legs and thighs were roasted, and one of his hands dropped off, before he expired;—a man not inferior to Ignatius himself in piety, or in sufferings for Christ? When brought before their prelatical judges, they were asked whether they would submit to the church or not. But they answered that they looked on the church of Rome as *antichristian*.* Bishop Hooper, in particular, while in prison, and about two months before his martyrdom, wrote a letter dated December 11, 1554, in which are these expressions :—"With us [in England] the wound which Antichrist [the pope or the popish church] had received is healed, and he [the pope] is declared head of the church, *who is not a member of it*."† How little idea had this venerable episcopal martyr of the English church that his own ministerial and episcopal character depended wholly on a spiritual pedigree which could be traced in a direct line to what he believed to be "Antichrist!"

It is granted that, for the sake of discipline and order in the settlement of churches, it is proper to limit the power of administering the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper to fewer hands than preaching. But if it be required to make up and pronounce *from Scripture* a candid judgment of what is *valid* in cases of exigence, or what is essential to the being of a church, then can it be doubted that even any private Christian was warranted in the apostolical age, and is still if he can, to convert a sinner from the error of his ways, and to teach him the principles of the Christian faith? Yet were not these two important parts of the apostolical commission?—

* Burnet's Hist., [Abridgment,] vol. ii, p. 272.

† Neal's Hist. of the Puritans, vol. i, p. 139.

Would it be amiss to say that they were even the most important? Our Lord himself made proselytes and instructed them, but baptized none,—leaving this merely ministerial work to his disciples. Peter was sent to open the door of faith to Cornelius and his family; but the charge of baptizing them he intrusted entirely to the Christian brethren who attended him. Ananias, a disciple, was employed to baptize Paul. And Paul says himself of his own mission, that Christ sent him not to baptize, but to preach the gospel; denoting thereby that baptizing, compared with preaching, though a part, was but an inferior and subordinate part, of his charge.*

In the epistles attributed to Ignatius, the phrase "*the church which is in Syria*" occurs twice. This, Dr. Campbell thinks, has much the appearance of an anachronism, which often betrays the hand of the interpolator. Nothing, he observes, can be more dissimilar to the dialect which prevailed in the apostolic age, and which continued to prevail in the second century. Except when *the church* denoted the whole Christian community, it meant no more than a single congregation. When, through the increase of converts, a bishop's parish, indeed, came to contain more people than could be contained in one congregation, the custom continued of still calling his charge *a church*, in the singular number. But it was not till after the distinction made between the metropolitan and the suffragans, which was about a century later, that this use originated of calling all the churches of a province the church (not the churches) of such a province. After the rise of the patriarchal jurisdiction the application of the term was extended still farther. All that was under the jurisdiction of the archbishop as patriarch was his church.†

That the early fathers entertained no such ideas of the essential characteristics of a Christian church, as Dr. Cooke has asserted, out of Ignatius, is plain from a striking passage in Tertullian, who, in the beginning of the third century, explicitly asserted that "*three persons, though laymen, make a church.*" His words are, "*Sed ubi tres, ecclesia est, licet laici:*" referring in the same place to a known practice even down to his time, viz., that when none of the clerical order could be had, (that is to say, in the exigence of necessity,) even private Christians celebrated the eucharist, and baptized, and served as priests to themselves. "*Ubi ecclesiastici ordinis non est consessus, et offers, et tinguis, et sacerdos es tibi solus.*"

Any person acquainted with the Latin language, and a stranger to the later disputes about sacerdotal orders, would hardly conceive the passage quoted from Tertullian susceptible of any other interpretation than that above given. Yet pains have been taken by persons who, as Dr. Campbell observes, cannot conceive a kingdom of Christ that is not a kingdom of priests, totally to disguise it. Tertullian's argument, in the place cited, obviously is, that in case of necessity even laymen have the right of priesthood in themselves; and this argument he confirms by the reference above mentioned to the known and uncensured practice of his time. The argument in this view was to his purpose; in any other it was utterly futile.—By the way, this passage serves also to show how widely different were the views of Tertullian and the Christian church of that age, from those now entertained and asserted by Dr. Onderdonk, in regard to the Christian sacraments in exigences of necessity.

* See Campbell, Eccles. Hist., pp. 62, 63.

† Ibid., pp. 100, 101.

That these principles are sanctioned by the earliest practice of the Christian church in the apostolical age, may be deduced from the testimony of Hilary, also a distinguished deacon of the Church of Rome, in the fourth century, who openly and without censure asserted that "*Postquam omnibus locis ecclesiæ sunt constitutæ, et officia ordinata, aliter composita res est, quam cœperat; primum enim omnes docebant, et omnes baptizabant, quibus-cunque diebus vel temporibus fuisset occasio.*" "*Ut ergo cresceret plebs, et multiplicaretur, omnibus inter initia concessum est et evangelizare, et baptizare, et scripturas in ecclesia explanare.*" Comm. on Eph. iv. ["After churches were established in every place, and offices ordained, things were managed otherwise than at the beginning: for, at first, all used to teach, and all to baptize, on whatever days or seasons there might be occasion."—"That the people might increase and be multiplied, it was at first granted to all to preach the gospel, and to baptize, and to explain the Scriptures in the church."—*Ed.*]

I do not say that this is proper where there are organized churches and regular pastors; but that, when there are not, in circumstances corresponding in effect to those of the primitive church at the period alluded to, the principle is still the same; and that, consequently, there is nothing in the principles of the gospel, or the allowed practice of the apostolical age, making it unlawful, but, on the contrary, much to justify it. This was manifestly the opinion of the Christians who, "except the apostles," were scattered abroad in consequence of the persecution which arose against the church in Jerusalem at the time of Stephen's martyrdom: for they "went everywhere preaching the word." The apostles, it will be observed, remained in Jerusalem. All the rest went everywhere preaching the word: and yet there is not the slightest intimation in the history that the apostles, though so recently commissioned directly by their Lord, denounced this course, or manifested any such spirit of exclusiveness as high-church bigots now exhibit.

[THE END.]



DEFENCE OF "OUR FATHERS,"

AND OF THE

ORIGINAL ORGANIZATION

OF

THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,

AGAINST

THE REV. ALEXANDER M'CAINE

AND OTHERS:

WITH HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL NOTICES OF EARLY AMERICAN
METHODISM.

BY JOHN EMORY, D. D.

"Multum refert ad retinendam ecclesiarum pacem, inter ea quæ jure divino præcepta sunt, et quæ non sunt, accurate distinguere."—*Grotius*.

"When men have caused such lamentable divisions in the church, by their several parties and factions, it concerns them to condemn all others besides themselves, lest they most of all condemn themselves for making unnecessary divisions in the church of God."—*Stillington*.

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PREFACE

TO

A DEFENCE OF "OUR FATHERS."

THE "fair" and "honourable" fame of "our fathers" is a treasure committed to our common trust; in which all who bear their name ought to feel an interest; and to defend which is our common duty. The best construction of which their conduct and motives are susceptible was due to them even while alive, with opportunities and means to explain, and to defend themselves. Much more is it due in instituting an inquiry into their history, now that they are silenced in the grave, and incapable of self-defence. As we would that men should do to us, when death shall have sealed our lips, and stricken from our hand the ready pen, let us do even so to them. For the measure which we mete to others, in the just retributive visitations of Heaven, will be meted to us again. We should take heed, then, how, with rash and wanton rudeness, we trample upon the ashes of deceased fathers.

In the present discussion, however, we ask not for charity, in the cold sense of that abused term; nor that pity shall turn the scale of judgment. We demand simple justice,—sheer justice. By that balance we agree that our fathers shall be tried. In that crucible we consent that both their acts and their motives shall be tested. All that we ask for them, in passing the ordeal, is, the allowance of the frailty inseparable from humanity; and from which, with the purest and best intentions, the wisest and the holiest mortals have never been exempted.

The representation which Mr. M'Caine has given of the account of the Methodist Episcopal Church, published in Buck's Theological Dictionary, as it regards myself, is wholly unfounded. The editor of that work never was indebted to me for that account: nor was I aware that it had been imputed to me, till I saw Mr. M'Caine's statement. It had actually been published in a former edition of Buck's Dictionary, and attributed to another hand, before I was "Book Agent," or "Publisher for the Methodist Episcopal Church" at all. This circumstance alone might have rendered the imputation of it to me at least "suspicious." In some other cases Mr. M'Caine has not deemed it a sufficient warrant for the assumption of facts, that he has merely found them stated in print. Had he been equally suspicious in this instance, it might have led him to farther inquiry; in which case the means of correct and certain information were easily and perfectly within his reach.

A communication from my friend, the Rev. N. Bangs, explanatory of that publication, and of his book on "Methodist Episcopacy," will be found in the Appendix. And in justice to him, as Mr. M'Caine has attacked that book, it ought to be known that Mr. M'Caine himself was one of the committee to whom it was submitted, before its publication, and by whom its publication was recommended. The recommendation stands on record, attested by his own hand. And whatever responsibility may exist for its doctrines, or for its official acceptance and publication "for the Methodist Episcopal Church," this "reverend gentleman," I conceive, is as much concerned in that matter as the author himself.

The work here presented to the reader is not a party work. It is an attempt to wipe off the foul stains which have been cast on us, through the aspersion of our founders. If Mr. M'Caine's book be true, it is impossible that any Methodist, who is a real friend of the church, and of our fathers, can otherwise than feel himself disgraced. To such, a satisfactory refutation of it cannot fail to be acceptable. Whatever may be the claims of the respective questions of ecclesiastical polity agitated among us, let them stand on their own bases. To attempt to promote any of them by personal attacks on the dead, is an unworthy resort; and, with the judicious and reflecting, can only be regarded as indicating a deficiency of better argument.

In the little leisure allowed me by other extensive and pressing engagements, I might perhaps be excused for craving some indulgence from the reader, in replying to a work in the preparation of which several years were employed. This, however, I trust, is not necessary. All that is asked is a candid examination of the *whole* of the following pages, in their consecutive order. This is the more necessary, as the various sections have a mutual connection and dependance;—subsequent ones assuming what had been established in the preceding; nor was it found convenient in all cases, to keep the matter of the respective titles entirely distinct.

In preparing this Defence the Divine assistance has been asked:—In sending it abroad, the Divine blessing is now implored.

J. EMORY.

New-York, November, 1827.

DEFENCE OF OUR FATHERS

SECTION I.—*Episcopacy.*

Mr. M'Caine's first inquiry is, "What views do ecclesiastical writers give us of an episcopal form of church government?"

In answer to this inquiry, he quotes certain authorities in support of the following positions, viz.:

That "Episcopalians, in the strict sense of the word, are those who maintain that episcopacy is of apostolic institution, or that the church of Christ has ever been governed by three distinct orders, bishops, presbyters or priests, and deacons;—that no one has a right to execute the ministerial office without having previously received a divine commission;—and the exclusive right of granting this commission is vested in the bishops as successors of the apostles."

That "it is a principle universally established among Episcopalians, that a succession from the apostles in the order of bishops, as an order superior to and distinct from presbyters, is a requisite without which a *valid Christian ministry* cannot be preserved; and that such bishops alone possess the power of ordaining and commissioning ministers to feed the flock of Christ."

That "since the distinction of bishops and presbyters has been of divine appointment, it necessarily follows that the power of ordination, which is the chief mark of this distinction, was reserved to the bishops by the same appointment."

Mr. M'Caine adds, "We have here some of the most

prominent features of an episcopal church, as laid down by writers of great celebrity. We would now ask our brethren who say Mr. Wesley recommended the episcopal mode of church government, if there is in any of the letters which he wrote a single line that would lead us to suppose that he held any one of the foregoing particulars? Nay, did he not positively say he did not hold them? What kind of an episcopal government then must it be that has not in it a single feature of episcopacy as described by ecclesiastical writers?"

But did not Mr. M'Caine know that there are "ecclesiastical writers" who describe "episcopacy" with *other* features? If he *did not*, his want of information is greater than we could have imagined. If he *did*, his argument is not ingenuous. We can scarcely believe that it can have imposed on himself: and it is certainly too glaringly fallacious to be imposed on others.

"It ought to be understood," says Dr. Samuel Miller, "that among those who espouse the episcopal side,—there are three classes.

"The first consists of those who believe that neither Christ nor his apostles laid down any particular form of ecclesiastical government to which the church is bound to adhere in all ages. That every church is free, consistently with the divine will, to frame her constitution agreeably to her own views, to the state of society, and to the exigencies of particular times. These prefer the episcopal government, and some of them believe that it was the primitive form; but they consider it as resting on the ground of *human expediency* alone, and not of *divine appointment*. This is well known to have been the opinion of Archbishops Cranmer, Grindal, Whitgift, Leighton, and Tillotson; of Bishops Jewel, Reynolds, Burnet, and Croft; of Drs. Whitaker and Stillingfleet, and of a *long list* of the *most learned and pious divines* of the Church of England, from the reformation down to the present day.

“Another class of Episcopalians go farther. They suppose that the government of the church by *bishops*, as a superior order to *presbyters*, was sanctioned by apostolic example, and that it is the duty of all churches to imitate this example. But while they consider episcopacy as necessary to the *perfection* of the church, they grant that it is by no means necessary to her *existence*; and accordingly, *without hesitation*, acknowledge as true churches of Christ many in which the episcopal doctrine is rejected, and presbyterian principles made the basis of ecclesiastical government. The advocates of this opinion, also, have been numerous and respectable, both among the clerical and lay members of the Episcopal churches in England and the United States. In this list appear the venerable names of Bishop Hall, Bishop Downham, Bishop Bancroft, Bishop Andrews, Archbishop Usher, Bishop Forbes, the learned Chillingworth, Archbishop Wake, Bishop Hoadly, and many more.

“A third class go much beyond either of the former. While they grant that God has left men at liberty to modify every other kind of government according to circumstances, they contend that one form of government for the church is unalterably fixed by divine appointment; that this form is episcopal; that it is absolutely *essential* to the *existence* of the church; that, of course, wherever it is wanting, there is no church, no regular ministry, no valid ordinances; and that all who are united with religious societies not conforming to this order are ‘aliens from Christ,’ ‘out of the appointed way to heaven,’ and have no hope but in the ‘uncovenanted mercies of God.’

“It is confidently believed,” continues Dr. Miller, “that the two former classes taken together, embrace at least *nineteen parts* out of *twenty* of all the Episcopalians in Great Britain and the United States; while, so far as can be learned from the most respectable writings, and other authentic sources of information, it is only the small

remaining proportion who hold the extravagant opinions assigned to the third and last of these classes."

If we may rely on the researches of Dr. Miller, then, it is so far from being true, that "it is a principle universally established among Episcopalians, that a succession from the apostles in the order of bishops, as an order superior to and distinct from presbyters, is a requisite without which a *valid Christian ministry* cannot be preserved; and that such bishops alone possess the power of ordaining and commissioning ministers to feed the flock of Christ;" that at least *nineteen-twentieths* of all the Episcopalians in Great Britain and in the United States hold no such sentiments.* Neither, as we shall show, were they the sentiments of Dr. Coke, or of Mr. Asbury, any more than of Mr. Wesley: nor do we believe that they are entertained by a single individual among Methodist Episcopalians, either in the ministry or in the laity.

The Irenicum of Dr. Stillingfleet, subsequently Bishop Stillingfleet, will be admitted to rank among the productions of "ecclesiastical writers", of distinguished "celebrity." From this work we shall exhibit a view of episcopacy somewhat different from that of Mr. M'Caine.†

"I assert," says Dr. Stillingfleet, "any particular form of government agreed on by the governors of the church, consonant to the general rules of Scripture, to be by divine right; that is, God, by his own laws, hath given men a power and liberty to determine the particular

* Gisborne also asserts that they are not the sentiments of the Church of England.—*Survey*, p. 254.

† The object of Stillingfleet, in this work, was to discuss and examine the divine right of the different forms of church government, according to the principles of the law of nature, the positive laws of God, the practice of the apostles and the primitive church, and the judgment of reformed divines; in order to lay a foundation for the peace of the church, and for the accommodation of the differences which then existed. His aim was to moderate the extravagant pretensions of *high churchmen*, on the one side, and the intemperate zeal of those, on the other, who were for destroying episcopacy altogether. With what ability, and excellent temper, and moderation, he performed this task will appear in the sequel.

form of church government among them. And hence it may appear, that though one form of government be agreeable to the word, it doth not follow that another is not, or because one is lawful, another is unlawful; but one form may be more agreeable to some parts, places, people, and times, than others are. In which case, that form of government is to be settled which is most agreeable to the present state of a place, and is most advantageously conducive to the promoting the ends of church government in that place or nation." *Irenicum*, pp. 9, 10, 2d edit. Lond. 1662.

"Matters of fact and mere apostolical practice, may, I freely grant, receive much light from the records of succeeding ages; but they can never give a man's understanding sufficient ground to infer any divine law, arising from those facts attested to by the practice or records of succeeding ages." *Ibid.*, p. 151.

In relation to arguments drawn from the testimony of antiquity, before their authority can be admitted in this controversy, Dr. Stillingfleet affirms, "these things must be manifested:—*that such things were unquestionably the practice of those ages and persons; that their practice was the same as that of the apostles; that what they did was not from any prudential motives, but by virtue of a law which did bind them to that practice.* Which things are easily passed over by the most eager disputers of the controversy about church government, but how necessary they are to be proved, before any form of government be asserted so necessary, that without it there can be no true church, any weak understanding may discern." *Ib.* p. 152.

"The *reason* of apostolical practice binds still, though not the *individual action*; that as they regulated churches for the best conveniency of governing them, so should the pastors of churches now." *Ib.*, p. 181.

"Any one particular form of government in the church is neither expressed in any direct terms by Christ, nor can

be deduced by just consequence ; therefore no such form of government is instituted by Christ." *Ib.*, p. 182.

" But though nothing can be inferred from hence as to the necessity of that office to continue in the church, which Timothy and Titus were invested in ; yet from the superiority of that power which they enjoyed over those churches, whether as evangelists or as fixed bishops, these two things may be inferred : *First*, That the superiority of some church officers over others is not contrary to the rule of the gospel : for all parties acknowledge the superiority of their power above the presbyters of the several cities ; only the *continuance* of this power is disputed by many. But if they had any such power at all, it is enough for my present design, viz., that such a superiority is not contrary to the gospel rule : or that the nature of the government of the church doth not imply a necessary equality among the governors of it. *Secondly*, Hence I infer that it is not repugnant to the constitutions of churches in apostolical times for men to have power over more than one particular congregation. For such a power Timothy and Titus had ; which, had it been contrary to the nature of the regiment of churches, we should never have read of in the first-planted churches. So that if those popular arguments of a necessary relation between a pastor and a particular people, of personal knowledge, care, and inspection, did destroy the lawfulness of extending that care or charge to many particular congregations, they would likewise overthrow the nature, end, and design of the office which Timothy and Titus acted in ; which had a relation to a multitude of particular and congregational churches. Whether their power was *extraordinary* or no, I now dispute not ; but whether such a power be *repugnant to the gospel* or no, which from their practice it is *evident* that it is not." *Ib.*, pp. 186, 187.

The foundation of this power was laid in the power which the apostles were invested with, which was ex-

tended over many, both churches and pastors. "If it be said, *The apostolical power, being extraordinary, must cease with the persons who enjoyed it*; I answer, *first*, What was *extraordinary* did cease; but all the dispute is what *was* extraordinary, and what was *not*. *Secondly*, By ceasing may be meant either ceasing as to its *necessity*, or ceasing as to its *lawfulness*. I say not but that the necessity of the office, as in their persons, for the first preaching and propagating the gospel, did cease with them; but that after their death it became *unlawful* for any particular persons to take the care and charge of diocesan churches, I deny. For to make a thing *unlawful*, which was before *lawful*, there must be some *express prohibition, forbidding* any farther use of such a power, which, I suppose, men will not easily produce in the word of God." *Ib.*, pp. 194, 5.

"The *extending* of any ministerial power is not the appointing of any *new office*; because every minister of the gospel hath a relation in *actu primo*" (primarily) "to the whole church of God; the restraint and enlargement of which power is subject to positive determinations of prudence and conveniency,—and therefore if the church see it fit for some men to have this power enlarged, for better government in some, and restrained in others, that *enlargement* is the appointing *no new office*, but the making use of a power already enjoyed for the benefit of the church of God. This being a foundation tending so fully to clear the lawfulness of that government in the church, which implies a superiority and subordination of the officers of the church to one another; and the church using her prudence in ordering the bounds of her officers, I shall do these two things: *First*, Show that the power of every minister of the gospel doth primarily and habitually respect the church in common. *Secondly*, That the church may, in a peculiar manner, single out some of its officers for the due administration of ecclesiastical power." *Ib.*, p. 195.

“The officers of the church may, in a peculiar manner, attribute a larger and more extensive power to some particular persons, for the more convenient exercise of their common power—grant to some the *executive part* of that power, which is originally and fundamentally common to them all. For our better understanding of this, we must consider a twofold power belonging to church officers, *a power of order*, and *a power of jurisdiction*.” *Ib.* p., 197.

Under this distinction he shows, that though every presbyter, primarily and inherently, as to *order* possesses a capacity for the highest ministerial acts, yet “some farther authority is necessary in a church *constituted*” (or organized) “besides the power of order; and when this power, either by consent of the pastors of the church, or by the appointment of a Christian magistrate, or both, is devolved to some particular persons, though *quoad aptitudinem*” (as to the capacity or fitness) “the power remain in every presbyter, yet *quoad executionem*, (as to the actual discharge or execution of it,) “it belongs to those who are so appointed. And therefore Camero determines that ordination doth not belong to the power of order, but to the power of jurisdiction, and therefore is subject to positive restraints, by prudential determinations. By this we may understand how lawful the exercise of an *episcopal* power may be in the church of God, supposing an *equality* in all church officers as to the power of *order*. And how incongruously they speak, who, supposing an equality in the presbyters of churches at first, do cry out that the church takes upon her the office of Christ, if she *delegates* any to a more *peculiar* exercise of the *power of jurisdiction*.” *Ib.*, pp. 197, 8.

“Before the jurisdiction of presbyters was restrained by mutual consent, in this instant, doubtless, the presbyters enjoyed the same liberty that the presbyters among the Jews did, of ordaining other presbyters, by that power they were invested in at their own ordina

tion.—In the first primitive church, the presbyters all acted in common for the welfare of the church, and either did or might ordain others to the same authority with themselves; because the *intrinsic* power of order is equally in them, and in those who were after appointed governors over presbyteries. And the collation of orders doth come from the power of order, and not *merely* from the power of jurisdiction. It being likewise *fully acknowledged* by the *schoolmen*, that bishops are *not* superior above presbyters, as to the power of *order*." *Ib.*, p. 273.

"It is evident *Jerome* attributes the first original of that *exsors potestas*," [delegated power, or power given by choice,] "as he calls it elsewhere, in the bishop above presbyters, not to any apostolical institution, but to the *free choice of the presbyters themselves*: which doth fully explain what he means by *consuetudo ecclesiæ* before spoken of, viz., that which came up by a voluntary act of the governors of churches themselves.—To which we may add what *Eutychius* the patriarch of Alexandria saith, in his *Origines Ecclesiæ Alexandrinæ*, published in Arabic by our most learned *Selden*, who expressly affirms, *that the twelve presbyters constituted by Mark upon the vacancy of the see, did choose out of their number one to be head over the rest, and the other eleven did lay their hands upon him, and blessed him, and made him patriarch.*" *Ib.*, p. 274.

"*Antonius de Rosellis* fully expresseth my meaning in this;"—(in the first period of the church.) "*Every presbyter and presbyters did ordain indifferently, and thence arose schisms*: thence the liberty was restrained and reserved peculiarly to some persons who did act in the several presbyteries, as the *הנשיא* or *Prince of the Sanhedrin*,—both parties granting that in the church such a restraint was laid upon the liberty of ordaining presbyters: and the exercise of that power may be restrained still, granting it to be radically and intrinsically in them.

So that this controversy is not such as should divide the church. For those that are for ordinations only by a superior order in the church, acknowledging a radical power for ordination in presbyters, which may be exercised in case of necessity, do thereby make it evident, that none who grant that, do think that any positive law of God hath forbidden presbyters the power of ordination; for then it must be wholly *unlawful*, and so in case of necessity it cannot be valid. Which doctrine I dare with some confidence assert to be a stranger to our Church of England,—on the other side, those who hold ordinations by presbyters *lawful*, do not therefore hold them *necessary*, but it being a matter of liberty, and not of necessity—this power then may be restrained by those who have the care of the church's peace, and matters of liberty being restrained, ought to be submitted to, in order to the church's peace." *Ib.*, p. 276.

"In the matter itself, I believe upon the strictest inquiry Medina's judgment will prove true, that Jerome, Austin, Ambrose, Sedulius, Primasius, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact, were all of Acrius's judgment as to the identity of both name and order of bishops and presbyters in the primitive church; but here lay the difference. Acrius from hence proceeded to separation from bishops and their churches, because they were bishops. And Blondell well observes, that the main ground why Acrius was condemned was for unnecessary separation from the church of Sebastia; and those bishops, too, who agreed with him in other things,—whereas Jerome was so far from thinking it necessary to cause a schism in the church, by separating from bishops, that his opinion is clear, that the first institution of them was for preventing schisms; and therefore, for peace and unity, he thought their institution very useful in the church of God." *Ib.*, pp. 276–7.

"When the apostles were taken out of the way, who kept the main power in their own hands of ruling their

several presbyteries, or delegated some to do it, (who had a main hand in planting churches with the apostles, and thence are called in Scripture, sometimes fellow-labourers in the Lord, and sometimes evangelists, and by Theodoret *apostles*, but of a *second order*,) after, I say, these were deceased, and the main power left in the presbyteries, the several presbyters enjoying an equal power among themselves,—the wiser and graver sort considered the abuses following the promiscuous use of this power of ordination, and withal having in their minds the excellent frame of the government of the church, under the apostles and their deputies, and for preventing of future schisms and divisions among themselves, they *unanimously* agreed to *choose one out of their number* who was best qualified for the management of so great a trust, and to *devolve the exercise of the power of ordination and jurisdiction* to him; yet so as that he act nothing of importance without the consent and concurrence of the presbyters, who were still to be as the *common council* to the bishop. This I take to be the *true* and *just* account of the *original of episcopacy* in the primitive church according to Jerome: which model of government, thus contrived and framed, sets forth to us a most lively character of that *great wisdom* and *moderation* which *then* ruled the heads and hearts of the primitive Christians, and which, *when men have studied and searched all other ways*, (the abuses incident to this government through the corruptions of men and times being retrenched,) *will be found the most agreeable to the primitive form*, both as asserting the *due interest of the presbyteries*, and allowing the *due honour of episcopacy*, and by the *great harmony of both*, carrying on the affairs of the church with the greatest unity, concord, and peace. Which form of government, I cannot see how any possible reason can be produced by either party why they may not with cheerfulness embrace it.”

Ib., 281-2.

“Thus we have once more cleared Jerome and the truth together; I only wish that all that are of his judgment for the practice of the primitive church, were of his temper for the practice of their own; and while they own not episcopacy as necessary by a divine right, yet (being duly moderated, and joined with presbyteries) they may embrace it, as not only a lawful, but very useful constitution in the church of God. By which we may see what an excellent temper may be found out, most fully consonant to the primitive church for the management of *ordinations* and *church power*, viz., BY THE PRESIDENCY OF THE BISHOP AND THE CONCURRENCE OF THE PRESBYTERY.” *Ib.*, p. 283.

“All that I have to say then, concerning the course taken by the apostles, in settling the government of the churches,—lies in these three propositions,—viz., *That neither can we have that certainty of apostolical practise, which is necessary to constitute a divine right; nor, secondly, is it probable that the apostles did tie themselves up to any one fixed course in modelling churches; nor, thirdly, if they did, doth it necessarily follow that we must observe the same.*” *Ib.*, p. 287.

“In this place, lib. 4, cap. 43, he” (Irenæus) “not only asserts the succession of presbyters to the apostles, but likewise attributes the *SUCCESSIO EPISCOPATUS*” (*the succession of the episcopate*) “to these very presbyters.” Whence comes then the community of names still, that those who are said to succeed the apostles, are called bishops in one place, but presbyters in another; and THE VERY SUCCESSION OF EPISCOPACY ATTRIBUTED TO PRESBYTERS?” *Ib.*, p. 307.

“And great probability there is, that where churches were planted by presbyters, as the Church of France by Andochius and Inignus, that afterward, upon the increase of churches and presbyters to rule them, they did from among themselves choose one to be as the bishop over them, as Pothinus was at Lyons. *For we*

nowhere read in those early plantations of churches, that where there were presbyters already, they sent to other churches to desire episcopal ordination from them." Ib., p. 375.

"It is a known instance, that in the ordination of Pelagius, first bishop of Rome, there were only two bishops concerned and one presbyter; whereas, according to the fourth *canon* of the Nicene council, three bishops are absolutely required for the ordination of a bishop: either, then, Pelagius was no canonical bishop, and so the point of succession thereby fails in the church of Rome: or else a presbyter hath the same intrinsical power of ordination which a bishop hath," [even in ordaining a bishop,] "but it is only restrained by ecclesiastical laws." *Ib.*, p. 380.

"I believe there will, upon the most impartial survey, scarce be one church of the reformation brought which doth embrace any form of government, because it looked upon that form as only necessary by an unalterable standing law; but *every one took up that form of government which was judged most suitable to the state and condition of their several churches.*" *Ib.*, p. 384.

"I doubt not but to make it evident, that the main ground for settling episcopal government in this nation," (England,) "was not accounted any pretence of *divine right*, but *the conveniency of that form of church government to the state and condition of the church at the time of its reformation.*" *Ib.*, p. 385.

"The first who solemnly appeared in vindication of the English *hierarchy* was Archbishop Whitgift: yet he asserts that *no kind of government is expressed in the word, or can necessarily be concluded from thence*: and again, *no form of church government is by the Scripture prescribed to, or commanded the church of God.*" *Ib.*, p. 394.

"That great light of the German church, Chemnitius, asserts the churches' freedom and liberty as to the orders and degrees of those who superintend the affairs of the

church; which he builds on a three-fold foundation:—

1. That the word of God nowhere commands *what* or *how many degrees* and *orders* of ministers there shall be. 2. That in the apostles' times there was not *the like number* in *all* churches, as is evident from Paul's epistles. 3. That in the apostles' times, in *some* places, *one person* did manage the *several offices* belonging to a church. Which three propositions are the very basis of all our foregoing discourse.—The sum is, it appears by the practice of the apostolical church, that the state, condition, and necessity of every particular church ought to be the standard and measure what offices and degrees of persons ought to be in it." *Ib.*, pp. 397, 398.

Zanchy, an eminent Presbyterian divine, "asserts it to be in the church's power and liberty to add several orders of ministers, according as it judgeth them tend to edification; and saith he is far from condemning the course of the primitive church, in erecting one as bishop over the presbyters, for better managing church affairs." *Ib.*, p. 399.

Fregevil, a divine of the French church, (whom the English bishop Hall calls "wise Fregevil, a deep head,") in his "Politick Reformer," says, "When the apostles first planted churches, the same being small and in affliction, there were not as yet any other bishops, priests, or deacons but themselves: they were the bishops and deacons, and together served the tables. These men, therefore, whom God raiseth up to plant a church, can do no better than, after the example of the apostles, to bear themselves in equal authority." *Ib.*, p. 400.

Beza, another eminent Presbyterian divine, says, "He was so far from thinking that the human order of episcopacy was brought into the church through rashness or ambition, that none can deny it to have been very useful as long as bishops were good. And those that both will and can, let them enjoy it still.—And elsewhere professeth all reverence, esteem, and honour

to be due to all such modern bishops, who strive to imitate the example of the primitive bishops, in a due reformation of the church of God according to the rule of the word. And looks on it as a most false and impudent calumny of some that said as though they" [of Geneva] "intended to prescribe their form of government to all other churches; as though they were like some ignorant fellows who think nothing good but what they do themselves." *Ib.*, p. 406.

To invalidate the authority of Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*, it has been objected by some extravagant asserters of the apostolical succession of episcopacy, that it was an indigested work, written when the author was young, and was subsequently retracted. How far this representation is correct, the following facts will show.—After being several years engaged in the composition of that work, the author published it in 1659, at the age of twenty-four. Three years afterward, in 1662, he published a second edition; and the same year he gave to the world his *Origines Sacræ*. Soon after these publications he met his diocesan, the celebrated Bishop Saunderson, at a visitation. The bishop, seeing so young a man, could hardly believe it was Stillingfleet, whom he had hitherto known only by his writings; and, after having embraced him, said, He much rather expected to have seen one as considerable for his *age*, as he had already shown himself for his learning. See the *Life of Bishop Stillingfleet*, pp. 12–16, as quoted by Dr. Miller.—“When a divine of acknowledged talents and learning,” adds Dr. Miller, “after spending several years in a composition of moderate length, deliberately commits it to the press; when, after reflecting on the subject, and hearing the remarks of his friends for three years longer, he publishes it a second time; and when, after this second publication, he is complimented for his great erudition by one of the most able and learned dignitaries of the age, there seems

little room for a charge of haste or want of digestion." Letters, pp. 270, 271, *n*.

"The truth seems to be," continues Dr. Miller, "that Dr. Stillingfleet, finding that the opinions of a number of influential men in the church were different from those which he had advanced in this work; and finding also that a fixed adherence to them might be adverse to the interest of the established church, in which he sought preferment, he made a kind of vague and feeble recantation; and wrote in favour of the apostolical origin of episcopacy. It is remarkable, however, that this prelate, in answer to an accusation of inconsistency between his early and his latter writings on this subject, assigned another reason besides a change of opinion, viz., that the former were written '*before the laws were established.*' But in whatever degree his *opinion* may have been altered, his *reasonings* and *authorities* have undergone no change. They remain in all their force, and have never been refuted, either by himself or by others." *Ib.*, p. 271.

Dr. White, now Bishop White of Pennsylvania, was of opinion that that learned prelate, Stillingfleet, was most probably not dissatisfied with that part of the *Irenicum* which would have been to his (Dr. White's) purpose; and which of course, as we shall presently show, is to our purpose. Burnet, the contemporary and friend of Stillingfleet, says, (History of his Own Times, anno 1661,) "To avoid the imputation that book brought on him, he went into the humours of a high sort of people beyond what became him, perhaps beyond his own sense of things." "The book, however," Bishop White adds, "was, it seems, easier *retracted* than *refuted*: for though offensive to many of both parties, it was managed, says the same author, [Burnet,] with so much *learning* and *skill*, that none of either side ever undertook to answer it." See "The Case of the Episcopal Churches in the United States Considered," page 22.

“Luther, and the leading divines of his denomination, supposed that a system” [of church government] “embracing some degree of imparity” [among ministers] “was in general expedient; and, accordingly, in proceeding to organize their churches, appointed *superintendents*, who enjoyed a kind of pre-eminence, and were vested with peculiar powers. But they explicitly acknowledged this office to be a *human*, and not a *divine* institution.” Miller’s Letters, p. 237.

The Lutheran churches in Sweden and Denmark are episcopal. See Mosheim, vol. iv, p. 279. Yet all ecclesiastical historians agree that when the Reformation was introduced into Sweden, the first ministers who undertook to ordain were *only presbyters*. Miller’s Letters, p. 240.

“It is equally certain that in the ordination of a *bishop*, if the other bishops *happen to be absent*, the more grave and aged of the ordinary pastors supply their place, and are considered as *fully invested with the ordaining power*.” *Ib.*, p. 241.

In case of necessity, the same power is recognised by the Methodist Episcopal Church, as fully invested in her body of presbyters. Yet, if by death, expulsion, or otherwise, there should at any time be no bishop remaining among us, even in this case the remaining presbyters would not themselves directly ordain new presbyters, but would first set apart another general superintendent, or superintendents, as their constituted organ for this purpose.

SECTION II.—*Sentiments of Bishop White.*

In the year 1783 a pamphlet was published in Philadelphia entitled, “The Case of the Episcopal Churches in the United States Considered.” This work has always been considered as the production of Dr. White,

now Bishop White, of Pennsylvania. Dr. Miller, in his Letters, published in 1807, p. 270, attributes it to him by name ; and we have not understood that its authenticity has ever been denied. A new edition of it has recently been published in Philadelphia, by William Stavely, publisher of the Philadelphia Recorder, a paper edited by a distinguished clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

It will be seen from this work with what ability Dr. White argued the case of the Episcopal churches in the United States at that period ; and how equally strikingly his arguments were adapted to the state of the Methodist societies at the same period.

In a "Sketch of a Frame of Government" offered by Dr. White, he says, "In each smaller district there should be elected a general vestry or convention, consisting of a convenient number, (the minister to be one.) —They should elect a clergyman their *permanent president* ; who, in conjunction with other clergymen to be also appointed by the body, may exercise such powers as are purely spiritual, *particularly that of admitting to the ministry*," p. 11.

Again ; "The conduct meant to be recommended,—is to include in the proposed frame of government *a general approbation of episcopacy* and a declaration of an intention to procure the succession as soon as conveniently may be ; but in the meantime *to carry the plan into effect without waiting for the succession*." *Ib.*, p. 15.

"But it will be also said," continues Dr. White, "that the very name of '*bishop*' is offensive : if so, *change it for another* ; let the *superior clergyman* be a *president*, a *superintendent*, or in plain English, and according to the literal translation of the original, an *overseer*. However, if *names* are to be reprobated, because the powers annexed to them are abused, there are few appropriated to either civil or ecclesiastical distinctions which would retain their places in our catalogue." *Ib.*, p. 17.

"The other part of the proposal" of Dr. White, "was an *immediate execution of the plan without waiting for the episcopal succession*. This is founded on the presumption that the worship of God and the instruction and reformation of the people, are the principal objects of ecclesiastical discipline—" *Ib.*

"It will be said, we ought to continue as we are, with the hope of obtaining it" [the succession] "hereafter. But," continues Dr. White, "are the *acknowledged ordinances* of Christ's holy religion to be suspended for years, perhaps as long as the present generation shall continue, out of delicacy to a *disputed point*, and that relating only to externals?—All the obligations of conformity to the divine ordinances, all the arguments which prove the connection between public worship and the morals of a people, combine to urge the adopting of some *speedy* measures, to provide for the public ministry in these churches. If such as have been above recommended," [viz., ordination by the president clergyman, in conjunction with other clergymen appointed by the body,] "should be adopted, and the episcopal succession afterward obtained, any *supposed* imperfections of the intermediate ordinations might, *if it were judged proper*, be supplied, *without acknowledging their nullity* by a *conditional* ordination resembling that of *conditional baptism* in the liturgy." *Ib.*

But if the "succession" had never been "afterward obtained," there can be little doubt that Dr. White would have maintained the validity of the ordinations on his plan, without the succession. For, as he very justly argues in another place, "If even those who hold episcopacy to be of divine right, conceive the obligation to it to be not binding when that idea would be destructive of public worship, much more must *they* think so, who indeed venerate and prefer that form as the most ancient and eligible, but without any idea of divine right in the case. This the author believes to be the senti-

ment of the great body of Episcopalians in America ; in which respect they have in their favour *unquestionably* the sense of the Church of England, and, as he believes, the opinions of her most distinguished prelates for piety, virtue, and abilities." *Ib.* p. 25.

To make any particular form of church government, though adopted by the apostles, unalterably binding, Dr. White maintains, "it must be shown enjoined in positive precept." *Ib.* He remarks farther, "that Dr. Calamy having considered it as the sense of the church," [of England,] "in the preface to the ordinal, that the three orders were of divine appointment, and urged it as a reason for non-conformity ; the bishop [Hoadly] *with evident propriety*, remarks, that the service pronounces *no such thing* ; and that therefore Dr. Calamy created a difficulty where the church had made none ; there being 'some difference,' says he, 'between these two sentences—bishops, priests, and deacons, are three distinct orders in the church *by divine appointment*,—and—from the apostles' time there have been in Christ's church, bishops, priests, and deacons."—"The same distinction," says Dr. White, "is *accurately drawn* and *fully proved* by Stillingfleet in the *Irenicum*." *Ib.*, p. 22, and *note*.

"Now," continues Dr. White, "if the form of church government rest on no other foundation than ancient and apostolical *practice*, it is humbly submitted to consideration, whether Episcopalians will not be thought *scarcely deserving the name of Christians*, should they, rather than consent to a temporary deviation, abandon every ordinance of positive and divine appointment." *Ib.*

The reader will please to observe, that, at the period when the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized, if we had not acted independently of the alleged apostolical succession, we must necessarily, for a long time at all events, have abandoned ordinances of positive and divine appointment. Mr. Wesley, also, as it had been

proposed to desire the English bishops to ordain part of our preachers for America, expressly states: 1. "I desired the bishop of London to ordain one only, but could not prevail. 2. If they consented, we know the slowness of their proceeding; but the matter admits of no delay." Dr. White was of the same opinion in relation to the Episcopal churches; and was in favour of carrying his plan of ordination, "without waiting for the episcopal succession," into immediate "execution."

"Bishop Hoadly says, The acceptance of *reordination* by the dissenting ministers, *would not be a denial of that right, which* (as they conceived) *presbyters had to ordain.*" *Ib.*, p. 23.

The learned Hooker also admits, that, in "*the exigence of necessity*," or "*the necessity of the present*," episcopal ordination, in the line of succession, is not indispensable." *Ecclesiastical Polity*, book 7, sec. 14.

"Had Mr. Hooker," says Dr. White, (p. 26,) "been asked to define '*the exigence of necessity*,' could he have imagined any more urgent than the case in question?"—the case of the Episcopal churches in this country at that time.—"Or had he been inquired of concerning the '*necessities of present times*,' could he have mentioned any in the cases to which he alludes (those of Scotland and Geneva) so strongly pleading for the liberty he allows, as those now existing in America?"—at the period of writing and publishing that pamphlet. The reader has only to change the name, and the just and solid argumentation of Dr. White is as exactly applicable to the case of the Methodist societies in America, at that period, as to "the case of the Episcopal churches."

"What necessity was there," continues Dr. White, "of the '*reformed churches abroad*' equal to ours? Is not an *immediate imitation* of the ancient usage '*impracticable*?' Would not such a plan as has been proposed," (viz., ordination by a clergyman chosen as a permanent

president, in conjunction with others appointed by the body,) "be conforming, as far as circumstances allow, to our ideas of 'the apostolic model?'" *Ib.*, p. 27. After quoting Archbishops Usher and Cranmer, with the highest eulogies, in support of this plan, Dr. White thus concludes the argument:—

"On the credit of the preceding names, the author rests this the last part of his subject; and if his sentiments should meet with an unfavourable reception, he will find no small consolation from being in a company so respectable." *Ib.*, p. 29.—So say we; especially since we have now added the name of Dr. White. More than forty years have elapsed since the publication of that pamphlet, yet we are not aware that it has ever been retracted. If it had been, we presume that some notice would have been given of it in the new edition just published, in the lifetime of the bishop, and at the place of his own residence. And, in any case, we might well say of this production, as Dr. White so appositely remarked of Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*,—it would be "easier RETRACTED than REFUTED."

SECTION III.—*Mr. Wesley's Opinion.*

"As to my own judgment," says Mr. Wesley, "I still believe the episcopal form of church government to be scriptural and apostolical: I mean, well agreeing with the practice and writings of the apostles. But that it is *prescribed* in Scripture, I do not believe. This opinion, which I once zealously espoused, I have been heartily ashamed of, ever since I read Bishop Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*. I think he has unanswerably proved, that neither Christ nor his apostles *prescribe* any particular form of church government; and that the plea of *divine right* for diocesan episcopacy was never heard of in

the primitive church." Wesley's Works, London edit., 1813, vol. xvi, p. 26.

So far as the judgment of Mr. Wesley is concerned then, it is, on the one hand, decidedly in favour of "the episcopal form of church government;" and, on the other, as decidedly against the high church pretensions.

The above extract will also serve to show the opinion which that great master of logic entertained of Stillingfleet's Irenicum.

SECTION IV.—*Ordination.*

WITH the preceding principles and authorities before us, it only remains to consider the origin and force of *ordination*, and we shall then be prepared to enter into an examination of the original organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"Their custom of ordination," says Dr. Stillingfleet, "was evidently taken up by the Christians from a correspondency to the synagogue.—That under the synagogue was done by laying on of hands.—A twofold use I find of this symbolical rite, beside the solemn designation of the person on whom the hands are laid. The *first* is to denote the delivery of the person or thing thus laid hands upon, for the right, use, and peculiar service of God. The *second* end of the laying on of hands was, the solemn invocation of the Divine presence and assistance to be upon and with the person upon whom the hands were thus laid.—Thence, in all solemn prayers, wherein any person was particularly designed, they made use of this custom of imposition of hands. From which custom Augustine speaks, *Quid aliud est manuum impositio nisi oratio super hominem?*" [what is imposition of hands but prayer over a man?] "Thence when Jacob prayed over Joseph's

children, he laid his hands upon them ; so when Moses prayed over Joshua. The practice likewise our Saviour used in blessing children, healing the sick, and the apostles in conferring the gifts of the Holy Ghost ; and from thence it was conveyed into the practice of the primitive church, who used it in any more solemn invocation of the name of God in behalf of any particular persons. But the most solemn and peculiar use of this imposition of hands among the Jews, was in the designing of any persons for any public employment among them. Not as though the *bare imposition of hands* did confer any power upon the person—but with that ceremony they joined those words whereby they did confer that authority upon them.—This custom being so generally in use among the Jews, in the time when the apostles were sent forth with authority for gathering and settling the churches, we find them accordingly making use of this, according to the former practice, *either in any more solemn invocation of the presence of God upon any persons, or designation and appointing them for any peculiar service or function.* For we have no ground to think that the apostles had any *peculiar command* for laying on their hands upon persons in prayer over them, or ordination of them. But the thing itself being enjoined them, viz., the *setting apart some persons* for the peculiar work of attendance upon the necessities of the churches by them planted, they took up and made use of a laudable rite and custom, then in use upon such occasions. And so we find the apostles using it in the solemn designation of some persons to the office of deacons ;—afterward upon an occasion not heard of in the synagogue,—for the conferring the gifts of the Holy Ghost. But although the occasion was extraordinary, yet the use of that rite in it was very suitable, inasmuch as those gifts did so much answer to the שכינה (*Shekinah*) “and the רוח הקודש” [the Holy Spirit] “which the Jews conceived did rest upon those

who were so ordained by imposition of hands. The next time we meet with this rite was upon a *peculiar designation* to a *particular service* of *persons already appointed by God for the work of the ministry* which is of Paul and Barnabas by the prophets and teachers at Antioch; whereby God doth set forth the use of that rite of ordination to the Christian churches." Iren. pp. 264–271.

"Ordination is the solemn setting apart of a person to some public church office." Westminster Assembly of Divines; examined and approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.—Neal, vol. v. p. 357; appendix.

Mr. M'Caine has taken pains to show that the validity of Presbyterian ordination was established by Mr. Wesley, and is the principle of the ordination of the British Conference. But who ever denied this? Is it not expressly and fully declared in our Book of Discipline, in answer to the following question:—"If by death, expulsion, or otherwise, there be no bishop remaining in our church, what shall we do?"

The answer is;—"The General Conference shall elect a bishop; and the *elders, or any three of them, who shall be appointed by the General Conference for that purpose*, shall ordain him, according to our form of ordination." Chap. i, sec. 4, quest. 2. And this answer shows both the good sense of those who framed it, and their acquaintance with ancient ecclesiastical usage. For, as Stillingfleet, above quoted, says, "Great probability there is that where churches were planted by presbyters," (as the Methodist Episcopal Church was,) "upon the increase of churches and presbyters, they did, from among themselves, choose one to be as the bishop over them.—For we nowhere read in those early plantations of churches, that *where there were presbyters already*, they sent to *other* churches to desire episcopal ordination from *them*."—It is also in exact accordance

with the practice of the church of Alexandria, which would not suffer the interference of foreign churches in consecrating their bishops, and of which the patriarch Eutychius, as quoted by Stillingfleet, “expressly affirms that the twelve presbyters constituted by Mark, upon the vacancy of the see, did choose out of their number one to be head over the rest, and the other eleven did lay their hands upon him and blessed him, and made him patriarch.”

When Mr. M'Caine asserts, that “neither are the ordinations which he” (Mr. Wesley) “conferred, viewed by writers among the English Methodists—as favouring our title of episcopacy,” he stops short of the phraseology used by the very writers whom he quotes. Their language is, “He” [Mr. Wesley] “gave up episcopal ordination *as understood by high churchmen.*” So do we. And so does our Discipline, clearly and unequivocally.

SECTION V.—*Ordination of Dr. Coke.*

HAVING thus cleared our way, we shall now take up the ordination of Dr. Coke.

“If,” says Mr. M'Caine, “Mr. Wesley ordained Dr. Coke a bishop, in the common acceptance of that term, then did he create a church officer greater than himself, and of consequence he brought himself into subjection to Dr. Coke, by making the doctor his superior.” Again, “If the doctor was constituted a bishop,” [*“in the common acceptance of that term,”* is here dropped,] “he was raised to a rank above a presbyter, and invested with superior powers. In that case he that was sent was greater than he that sent him”—and “then Mr. Wesley, who was only a presbyter, and consequently inferior to a bishop, assumed the prerogative to send his superior to do a work, in his name, which he himself could not

go to do.”—And again: “If the doctor, by the imposition of Mr. Wesley’s hands, is created a bishop, then the objection of the bishop of Norwich lies in full force—‘If a presbyter can ordain a bishop, then the greater is blessed of the less,’ ” &c.

We have already seen what Mr. M’Caine represents to be “the common acceptation” of the term bishops, (which, by the way, we have shown is *not* the common acceptation,) viz., an order of ministers distinct from presbyters *by divine appointment*, to whom the power of ordination is reserved *by the same appointment*, and is the chief mark of their distinction:—and in whom, as successors of the apostles, is vested the *exclusive* right of granting the divine commission to execute the ministerial office.—See *History and Mystery*, pp. 9, 10.*—Now *if* Mr. Wesley ordained Dr. Coke in no such sense;—*if* he pretended to no such thing;—*if* neither our bishops nor the Methodist Episcopal Church have ever pretended to any such thing,—what then? Why then it follows that all the smart sayings on this transaction, which have been repeated and copied from my lord bishop of Norwich down to Mr. M’Caine, are wholly wide of the mark, and are shaken both from Mr. Wesley and from us, as “the lion shakes to air the mists shed on his mane.”—They may serve to mislead the ignorant, and such as may be captivated by sound more than by sense. But as to the argument they are perfectly nugatory.—If, say Dr. Whitehead and Mr. Moore, Mr. Wesley’s position be true, that bishops and presbyters are the same order, the bishop of Norwich should have first overthrown this position, if he could, to have established his own.

But says Mr. M’Caine, “as Mr. Wesley and Dr. Coke

* One of Mr. M’Caine’s authorities is Archbishop Potter, who was the champion of the *High-church* party; while Dr. Hoadly, bishop of Winchester, with great judgment and eloquence, advocated principles of greater moderation.

were of the same order,—the doctor had as good a clerical right to ordain Mr. Wesley a bishop, as Mr. Wesley had to ordain the doctor.”—As good a *clerical* right;—Mr. M’Caine seems to have felt here that his argument was lame. He knows well that the true question is not as to the mere *clerical* power of ordination, *abstractly*; but whether in the circumstances then existing, as to acknowledged *jurisdiction*, and the exigency of the times, Dr. Coke had as good a right to ordain and send Mr. Wesley to superintend the American Methodists, as Mr. Wesley had to summon a council and to ordain and send him? And whether it was so regarded by the Methodists of that day, either in Europe or in America?

The Methodist societies in America, although under the spiritual direction of the Rev. John Wesley and his assistants, whom, under God, they regarded as their father and founder, yet previously to the revolutionary war were religious societies within the Church of England, without any provision among themselves for the administration of the ordinances. From that church they were separated, let it be carefully observed, not by any *schism*, or *faction*, or any species of misconduct on their part; but by the acts of Providence, and by circumstances wholly beyond their control. The Church of England had *ceased to exist* in America, and the Methodists here were absolutely compelled either to provide for themselves, or to live in neglect of the positive ordinances of Christ. Their case was clearly that of “the exigence of necessity,” agreeably to Hooker himself; and most undeniably so agreeably to the principles then advocated by Dr. White. Our societies had suffered long, as sheep without shepherds. They had endured the privation of the ordinances till the patience of many had been exhausted, and a serious disunion was threatened; if not dissolution. A portion of the preachers and societies in the south had resolved on measures for the administration of the ordinances among

themselves. This step was strenuously resisted by the conference which met at Baltimore in 1780. That conference unanimously disapproved of the measures adopted by their brethren in Virginia, and resolved that they would not regard them as Methodists in connexion with Mr. Wesley, till they came back; and Francis Asbury, Freeborn Garrettson, and William Watters were appointed a committee to attend the Virginia conference, and inform them of these proceedings, and receive their answer. On that occasion Mr. Asbury exerted his utmost influence to effect a reunion, and, in conjunction with his colleagues, happily succeeded. The proposal by which it was accomplished, after much discussion and distress, *originated* with him. (See Mr. Snethen's Reply to J. O'Kelly, p. 8, and Lee's History, p. 73.)* It was, that they should consent to bear their privations yet longer;—to write to Mr. Wesley, and lay their situation before him, and take his advice. This proposal was agreed to; a division was prevented; a happy union was restored; and the preachers departed with thankful hearts, to persuade the people to unite with them in longer forbearance.

Yet it was not till several years after this;—not till the Church of England in America was confessedly extinct by the acknowledgment of our independence, and all hope of supplies from that quarter in any reasonable time, if ever, had utterly failed, that Mr. Wesley resolved on the adoption of the measures which, from his relation to the Methodists (under the true Head of the church,) and their urgent solicitations, he had long before believed himself fully authorized to adopt; but which, *for peace' sake*, he had many years forborne. On

* Mr. Watters says this proposal was made "by one of their own party." This apparent discrepancy is explained by Mr. Snethen in his "Answer to J. O'Kelly's Vindication." Mr. Asbury originally made the proposal to John Dickens, to whom Mr. Watters alludes. John Dickens reduced it to writing, and proposed it to the conference.

the same principle, *for peace' sake*, he had desired the bishop of London to ordain only one preacher for America, but could not prevail. Driven to this extremity, with all his societies and preachers in America, he summoned a council of grave and pious presbyters. These were, in conjunction with him, *our body of presbyters*, and with their advice he acted. The venerable Fletcher was one of the council, though not present at the subsequent ordinations. Mr. Wesley's scruples were now ended, and he resolved, with the aid of other presbyters, to exercise that authority to which he believed himself called *by the providence of God*, and *by the "necessities of the times."*—Now if the episcopacy of the Church of England, (and consequently of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this country,) rest on no other foundation than ancient and apostolic *practice*, we humbly submit, (in language similar to that of Bishop White on another occasion,) whether Methodists would scarcely have been deserving the name of Christians, if, rather than consent to a temporary (or even to a permanent) deviation from that line of episcopacy, they had abandoned every ordinance of positive and divine appointment.

Bishop White states, as quoted by Mr. M'Caine, that a union of the Methodists in this country with the Protestant Episcopal Church, was proposed by Dr. Coke in 1791, the terms of which, on the doctor's part, as stated by Bishop White, all will admit were sufficiently humble. Why did that proposal fail? It is stated, on the same authority, that it failed in consequence of the proceedings of the convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, before whom the subject was laid in 1792. The Rev. Dr. Wyatt of Baltimore published, in 1820, a similar statement. If this statement be correct, then the responsibility for the rendering of our deviation from that line of episcopacy *permanent*, rests on *them*. The proposed union by which our "*temporary deviation*" might have been cured, according to Dr. White's

plan of *conditional* ordinations, on the principle of *conditional* baptisms, was rejected by *them*. Is it then for *them* now to reproach us with this deviation, which had been adopted, clearly, in the "exigence of necessity," and which *they*, as much as in them laid, thus contributed to render permanent? This would be both cruel and unchristian. It is not, we think, in the power of the acutest disputant to impugn the ground on which we stand without equally impugning that assumed by Dr. White in "The Case of the Episcopal Churches Considered:" nor to *refute* this without refuting that. We shall have occasion to revert again to the statement respecting Dr. Coke's proposal to Bishop White, and shall only add here, that, from what we have said, it must plainly appear that the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church affords no colour of pretext or of countenance to any leaders or authors of schism, faction, disorganization, or disunion. The proceedings of "our fathers" partook of no such character. Nor can the precedent of their example be pleaded by the instigators or abettors of any such disorders.

The following is a copy of the letters testimonial delivered by Mr. Wesley to Dr. Coke, after his ordination, agreeably to the advice of Mr. Fletcher. It was taken by Mr. Drew from the original, in Mr. Wesley's own hand-writing, preserved among the papers of Dr. Coke.

"To all to whom these presents shall come, John Wesley, late fellow of Lincoln College in Oxford, presbyter of the Church of England, sendeth greeting.

"Whereas many of the people in the southern provinces of North America, who desire to continue under my care, and still adhere to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, are greatly distressed for want of ministers to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, according to the usage of

the same church : and whereas there does not appear to be any other way of supplying them with ministers—

“ Know all men, that I, John Wesley, think myself to be providentially called at this time to set apart some persons for the work of the ministry in America. And therefore, under the protection of Almighty God, and with a single eye to his glory, I have this day set apart as a superintendent, by the imposition of my hands and prayer, (being assisted by other ordained ministers,) Thomas Coke, doctor of civil law, a presbyter of the Church of England, and a man whom I judge to be well qualified for that great work. And I do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern, as a fit person to preside over the flock of Christ. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four.

“ JOHN WESLEY.”

This document leads us to remark ; 1. Mr. M'Caine says, (p. 21,) it is not a letter “ of ordination,” but of “ appointment.”—Why ? Because “ the *term* ‘ ordination ’ is not found in it.” And is the term “ appointment ” found in it ? If it be good logic that because the term “ ordination ” is not found in it, *therefore* it is not a letter of ordination ; surely it is equally so that because the term “ appointment ” is not found in it, *therefore* it is not a letter of appointment. According to this logic, it may be questioned whether Mr. M'Caine himself has ever been either *ordained* or *appointed* an *elder* ; for we suspect that neither the term *ordained* nor *appointed* will be found in his credentials. On Mr. M'Caine's principles of *verbality*, this document should be called a letter of “ *set apart* ! ” for these are the *words* used by Mr. Wesley. This is a specimen of Mr. M'Caine's logic in the management of documents. A similar one will be found when we come to the term *bishop*.

2. If this were not an ordination, we should be glad to be informed what constitutes one. It was performed as ordinations usually are ; with the usual solemnities ;—by “imposition of hands and prayer ;” with the assistance of “other ordained ministers ;” and “under the protection of Almighty God.” If it was not intended as an ordination, it was certainly a very solemn mockery ;—a trifling with sacred things, to charge Mr. Wesley with which would be loading his memory with “obloquy” indeed.

3. With what *office* did Mr. Wesley, by these solemnities, and by this instrument, intend to invest Dr. Coke ? Not with the *episcopal* office, says Mr. M'Caine. Why ?—Because the term “episcopal” was not used. Let us take the words then that were used. Dr. Coke, who was already a presbyter, was “set apart” by Mr. Wesley, assisted by other presbyters, “as a *superintendent*”—“to *preside over the flock of Christ*,” or, as he expressed it in his letter “to Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury,” &c., dated a few days subsequently, “*over our brethren in North America*,”—to superintend, and preside over, the whole body of the Methodist preachers on this continent, with hundreds, if not thousands of congregations, and tens of thousands of members :—to ordain other ministers, and to exercise all the powers usually considered episcopal. Indeed, the allegation has usually been that the powers with which our superintendents were confessedly invested from the *commencement*,—and *with Mr. Wesley's sanction*, were too great even for an episcopacy. And will Mr. M'Caine, then, yet contend, that Mr. Wesley did not intend that the *office* of our general superintendents in America should be an *episcopal* office in *fact*, though under the title of superintendents ? Will he so far jeopard his reputation both for understanding and for candour ? To waste time on such a question would really seem to us to be trifling both with ourselves and with our readers.

4. Mr. Wesley says that those who desired his advice and help “adhered to the doctrine and *discipline* of the Church of England,” and were “greatly distressed for want of ministers to administer the sacraments—*according to the usage of the same church.*” Were not the “discipline” and the “usage” of that church *episcopal*? And does not Mr. Wesley, in this instrument, plainly declare his intention to follow that discipline and usage, so far as he could, without entangling us again with the English hierarchy?

Mr. M'Caine, indeed, would make out that Mr. Wesley's intention was that we should continue connected with the Church of England. But the contrary is plain. The wide difference between the case of the Methodist societies in England and those in this country, in consequence of the revolutionary war, Mr. Wesley himself clearly defines. “The case,” he says, “is widely different between England and North America. Our American brethren are now *totally disentangled*—from the English hierarchy—*we dare not entangle them again.* They are now at full *liberty* simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive church. And *we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty.*”

5. Mr. Wesley, in this document, assigns as one of the grounds of his proceeding, precisely that basis of “the exigence of necessity,” in which both the *propriety* and the *duty* of a similar proceeding on the part of “the Episcopal churches,” even at an earlier period, had been so ably advocated by Dr. White. “And whereas,” he says, “there does not appear to be any other way of supplying them with ministers.”—He had, for peace' sake, previously applied to the bishop of London to ordain one only, but could not prevail. And if the English bishops would even have consented, he knew the slowness of their proceedings; and the matter admitted of no delay.*

* In 1783, and we think earlier, Dr. White maintained that this “exigence of necessity” then existed in “the Episcopal churches.” Yet they

6. If the “*fuller powers*,” which Mr. Wesley desired Dr. Coke to meet him in Bristol to receive, were not *episcopal in fact*, what were they? Dr. Coke was already a presbyter; and as to the mere “appointing” of superintendents, in a lower sense, to take charge of societies as Mr. Wesley’s *assistants*, it would have been a perfect novelty in Methodism to have used such ceremonies barely for that purpose. Mr. Rankin and Mr. Asbury had both been superintendents in America, in this sense, as Mr. Wesley’s *assistants*, without any such ceremonies. And, as a conclusive argument against such a view of this transaction, we add,—if Mr. Wesley, by setting apart Dr. Coke, and investing him with “fuller powers,” meant barely to “appoint” him a superintendent, as his *assistant*, in the sense in which he had ordinarily used this term, then it would have been utterly inconsistent with his known principle to have associated Mr. Creighton, Mr. Whatcoat, and Mr. Vasey, with him, in making the appointment.

7. If Mr. Wesley’s preferring the title “superintendent,” proves that Dr. Coke, under that title, was not intended by Mr. Wesley to be a bishop *in fact*, it equally follows that his preferring the title “elder” proves that

did not succeed in obtaining ordination from the English bishops till 1787; and even then not until it was authorized by an act of parliament. Dr. Seabury had previously succeeded in obtaining ordination from the nonjuring bishops of Scotland, though he could not from the English bishops. But even this was not till after the ordination of Dr. Coke as a general superintendent. When some young gentlemen went to England, after the revolution, to obtain episcopal ordination, the archbishop of Canterbury was of opinion that no English bishop could ordain them unless they took the oath of allegiance. Mr. Southey says they then applied for advice and assistance to Dr. Franklin, who was then our minister in France. He consulted a French clergyman, and found that they could not be ordained in France, unless they vowed obedience to the archbishop of Paris; and the pope’s nuncio, whom he consulted also, informed him that the Romish bishop in America could not lay hands on them unless they turned Catholics. Franklin therefore advised them, either that the Episcopalian clergy in America should become Presbyterians, or that they should *elect a bishop for themselves*. So true it was, as Mr. Wesley said, he knew the slowness and the entanglingness of their proceedings; and such was Franklin’s advice in the case.

he did not intend Mr. Whatcoat and Mr. Vasey to be priests, or presbyters, in fact. The argument is as good in the one case as in the other. The forms of ordination prepared for us by Mr. Wesley, for setting apart our superintendents and elders, as we shall hereafter show, were merely an abridgment of the forms of the Church of England for setting apart *bishops* and *priests*. And as he substituted the term superintendent for bishop, so he also substituted the term elder for priest;—clearly intending substantially the same ecclesiastical officers in each case, but not the same titles.

8. That in such an “exigence of necessity” as then existed, and at the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church it was admissible for a body of presbyters to constitute a *bishop* in *fact*, in our acceptation of the term, with the title of superintendent, president, inspector, or overseer, as they judged best, we have already supported by abundant evidence.

9. When Lord King lays it down as the primitive usage that there was “but one supreme bishop in a place,” he uses the term expressly in relation to “the proper pastor or minister of a parish, having care of the souls of that church or parish;” though in some cases there were other ministers subordinately connected with him, and assisting him. In *this* sense we admit that there ought to be but one bishop, or minister having the pastoral charge, in one place. And this is *our* usage. But that in the apostles’ time there were individuals travelling extensively as superintendents, bishops, inspectors, or overseers, in a larger sphere, and setting in order the things that were wanting in multitudes of churches, is undeniable. Whether such church officers were *extraordinary*, or no, as Stillingfleet says, we now dispute not: but whether they be repugnant to the gospel or no;—which, from their practice, as he adds, it is evident that they are not. That what was *extraordinary* in the apostolic oversight, and in that of Timothy

and Titus, did cease with them, may be admitted. But the question remains, what *was* extraordinary, and what was *not*? For surely not every practice and usage of the apostles was intended to cease with them. For then the office of preaching itself must cease, for this was their main office. Besides, by *ceasing*, may be meant, either ceasing as to its necessity, or as to its *lawfulness*. And to make a thing *unlawful*, which was before *lawful*, there ought to be some express prohibition of it: which, in this case, we suppose, with Stillingfleet, men will not easily produce in the word of God. And admitting the *lawfulness* of our practice in this respect, the expediency and utility of it must be judged by those whose concern it is. That such an itinerant and extensive oversight as was practised by the apostles, and by Timothy and Titus, fell greatly into disuse very shortly after their decease, is true. But surely it cannot be conclusively inferred from this that it is *unlawful* to *revive* a similar superintendency in churches which may desire it, and believe it to be both practicable and useful. Such an episcopacy, as Mr. Wesley says of “the episcopal form of church government,” we believe to be both Scriptural and apostolical. We mean, as he adds, “well agreeing both with the practice and with the writings of the apostles.”

That “plain John Wesley, the fountain of our episcopal authority,” should be “improved into *father* Wesley” is made by Mr. M’Caine, p. 53, a matter of ridicule. But when he wrote this, he probably forgot that, when it suited his purpose, he had himself used the same language. “Mr. Wesley,” he says, p. 23, “considered himself, under God, the *father* of all the Methodists in Europe and America.” And again, p. 43, when he wished to represent it as odious in our fathers not to have implicitly obeyed the wish of Mr. Wesley on a particular occasion, then he is careful himself to

improve "plain John Wesley," into "the *father* of the Methodist people."

This relation, however, Mr. Wesley did himself expressly claim; and the claim was recognised by the whole body of Methodists, both in Europe and in America. "You," said he to Mr. Asbury, "are the elder brother of the American Methodists. I am, under God, the *father* of the whole family. Therefore I naturally care for you all in a manner no other person can do. Therefore I, in a measure, provide for you all." And in the *secondary* sense of Theodoret, Fregevil, and Stillingfleet, we do not hesitate to denominate him the *apostle* of the whole Methodist people, obnoxious as that term is to Mr. M'Caine; and even to assert, that he did in *fact* claim and exercise episcopal authority among them; and that both he and they believed that in all this he acted in the order of Divine providence.

Mr. Wesley did himself assert that he believed himself to be "a Scriptural *ἐπίσκοπος*, *episcopos*, as much as any man in England or in Europe." Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. ii, p. 280. And he asserted this with direct reference to his "*acting as a bishop*," in reply to the remarks of his brother Charles. If by *episcopos* he did not mean to aver himself a *bishop in fact*, and entitled to "act as a bishop," in our acceptation of the term, then his reply did not meet his brother's objection, but was a mere evasion; and one too shallow, though mantled in Greek, to deceive, or to satisfy, so good a scholar as his brother Charles. That he meant that he was an *episcopos*, merely in the sense of being the proper pastor of a particular congregation or parish, cannot be: for such he was not. Yet, although he did believe himself entitled to exercise episcopal authority among the Methodists; as much so as any bishop of the Church of England—in the Church of England, it should be carefully noted that for peace' sake, he refrained from the exercise of it with respect to ordina-

tion, till imperiously urged to it by the "exigence of necessity;" and until, if he had refused longer, he must have permitted his numerous societies in America, who were loudly calling on him for advice and help, to live in the neglect of imperative ordinances of Christ's positive institution. In any reference to the precedent of Mr. Wesley's example, then, we shall do him great injustice, if we are not careful always to combine all these various views, relations, and circumstances. In relation to the general church, or to the Church of England, Dr. Coke and Mr. Wesley, as presbyters, were undoubtedly equal in order. Yet that their acknowledged jurisdiction, in relation to the Methodist societies, was vastly different in Dr. Coke's own view, and that he knew it to be so regarded by the Methodist people, is manifest from the following extract of a letter which he addressed to Mr. Wesley previously to his coming to America.

"HONOURED AND DEAR SIR,

"The more maturely I consider the subject, the more expedient it appears to me that the power of ordaining others" [having reference to the ordination to be established for the Methodists in America] "should be received by me from *you*, by the imposition of your hands; an authority formally received from you will (I am conscious of it) be fully admitted by the people; and my exercising the office of ordination without that formal authority may be disputed, if there be any opposition on any other account. I could therefore earnestly wish you would exercise that power in this instance, which I HAVE NOT THE SHADOW OF A DOUBT, but God hath invested you with, for the good of our connection." Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. ii, p. 276.*

* Yet, in the face of this broad declaration, Mr. M'Caine repeatedly endeavours to make out that Dr. Coke *was* doubtful of the validity of his own ordination.

SECTION VI.—*Dr. Coke's Letter to Bishop White.*

IN a letter to Bishop White of Pennsylvania, dated 24th April, 1791, Dr. Coke says, Mr. Wesley “did indeed solemnly invest me, as far as he had a right so to do, with episcopal authority.” On this phrase, “as far as he had a right so to do,” Mr. M'Caine declaims with great self-gratulation. And connecting with it what he calls Dr. Coke's “proposals to Bishop White, to have the preachers in the Methodist Episcopal Church reordained by Bishop White, and himself and the gentleman connected with him, consecrated for the episcopal office,” he exults in these figments, as if he had convicted Dr. Coke out of his own mouth, that he *did* doubt the validity of his own ordination, and consequently his right to ordain others; although Dr. Coke constantly affirmed that he *did not* doubt it, nor had a *shadow of a doubt* of it; and was in the constant practice of ordaining others.

Mr. M'Caine has been careful to collect into his pamphlet the stale objections of the enemies not only of our episcopacy, but of our whole ministry and order—and, if we are to be governed by his authorities, his own ordination as an *elder* is not one whit more valid than the episcopal ordination of our bishops. If the reader will turn to p. 10 of “History and Mystery,” &c., he will find a passage, which we have already quoted, commencing thus: “It is a principle universally established among Episcopalians,” &c. Mr. M'Caine marks that passage as a *quotation*, yet gives no authority for it; although *in every other instance under that head* he names his authority. Why did he not name it in this? Was it not because he was himself ashamed of it? Because it was taken from an avowed and personal enemy of our whole order; who denied the

validity of every gospel ordinance as administered by us; and who, with all the effrontery of Rome, asserts in the very next paragraph to that which Mr. M'Caine cites, that "no true church can exist without a true episcopacy, and that no episcopacy can be a true one but that which is derived from the holy apostles in the order of bishops as superior to, and distinct from, the order of presbyters?" The author of that pamphlet, after having *separated himself* from the Methodist Church, exerted what skill he had to prove us guilty of schism, and destitute of every valid gospel ordinance. From *that* pamphlet, if we may judge from their correspondence, Mr. M'Caine has drawn his materials on the subject of this section; but has not had the candour to inform his readers that there has ever been any *refutation* of that author's aspersions.

The laboured declamation of Mr. M'Caine on this subject, as, indeed, a large portion of his book, is founded on an entire misconception or misrepresentation of Methodist episcopacy. Mr. Wesley invested Dr. Coke with "episcopal *authority*" in relation to the Methodists in America. In relation to *other* churches, Dr. Coke had no "episcopal *authority*;" nor did Mr. Wesley claim a right to give him any. In this respect his language was considerate and precise. Neither have the bishops of other churches any "episcopal *authority*" in relation to us, nor could they confer such authority among *us* on any individual without *our* act.

Had Dr. Coke, for the sake of union with the Protestant Episcopal Church, consented to submit to a second episcopal ordination, or "consecration," it would by no means have proved that he therefore acknowledged, or even doubted, the validity of his prior ordination. It is well known that some Methodist presbyters, who have joined other churches, have *submitted* to a second ordination, *not for their own satisfaction*, but for the satisfaction of *others*, and because it was required

of them in order to the union. The case would have been analogous, had Dr. Coke submitted to a second episcopal ordination, for the sake of union with the Protestant Episcopal Church. *With his views at that time* of the probable effects of such a union, he might not have considered it wrong, in such circumstances, to submit to a reordination. That such were the principles by which he was actuated, we have his own positive declarations. An authenticated copy of a letter which he addressed to Bishop Asbury on the subject is now before us, dated, "Near Leeds, Feb. 2, 1808." In this letter he states that he had heard that there had been a paper war concerning a letter which he wrote, in the year 1791, to Bishop White. He acknowledges that when he wrote that letter he did then believe that the union which he proposed would have a good effect. And particularly that "it would very much enlarge our field of action, and that myriads would, in consequence of it, attend our ministry, who were then much *prejudiced* against us." He adds, however, that he had no idea of "deciding" on any thing;—that such an idea, without the concurrence of Bishop Asbury and of the General Conference, would have been absurd, and that what he did was intended to ascertain the sense of the Protestant Episcopal Church, preparatory to the General Conference; but at the same time he expressly declares, "I never applied to the convention for re-consecration. I never intended that either you or I should *give up* our episcopal ordination. My proposals secured our *discipline in all points*." And afterward adds, "But I *now* see that the failure of my plan, which was laid down from the purest motives, was for the best." The Rev. Ezekiel Cooper has in his possession an original letter from Dr. Coke to himself, of the same import.

Bishop White states that one of the outlines of Dr. Coke's plan, as to "the Methodist ministers," was "*their continuing under the superintendence then existing, and on*

the practices of their peculiar institutions." This coincides with Dr. Coke's statement. Bishop White adds, "There was also suggested by him a propriety, but not a condition made, of admitting to the episcopacy himself and the gentleman associated with him in the superintendence of the Methodist societies." This suggestion, so far as we can discover, is not to be found in Dr. Coke's letter. It is true, Bishop White says in another place, as quoted by Mr. M'Caine in a *note*, "*Or it may have been the consecration of himself,*" [Dr. Coke,] "and the gentleman connected with him, for this measure was hinted in a conversation that afterward took place between us." The very terms of this note show doubt on the face of it. And as we shall presently demonstrate that Bishop White mistook the import of Dr. Coke's *letter*, it must be admitted to be possible that he might at least equally have misapprehended a *hint* in conversation. But why does Mr. M'Caine commence his quotation from Bishop White's letter of Sept., 1806, in this broken manner, "*Or it may have been,*" &c.? What went before "*Or?*" and why was it not quoted? If we examine the *preceding part* of that paragraph in Bishop White's letter, the reason is obvious. It did not suit Mr. M'Caine's purpose. Bishop White was *conjecturing* by what means Dr. Coke had probably contemplated the removal of a difficulty on the part of some of the preachers in rising up to ordination, if it were left dependent on the then bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church. That difficulty respected those preachers who were not acquainted with the learned languages. "What was his intended mean of removal of this difficulty," says Bishop White, "does not appear in the letter. *It may have been* a promise, on the part of the bishops, that the ordination of the persons in question should not be prevented by that circumstance. *Or it may have been,*" &c., as quoted by Mr. M'Caine. The *whole passage*, taken together, shows that it was *conjec-*

tural. As such we leave it. The propensity of the human mind to conjecture what is most accordant with its own habits of thinking, or what is best calculated to support its own views, is too well known to require discussion here.

But even admitting that Bishop White may have been correct in his impression, that Dr. Coke did hint in conversation the propriety of admitting to the episcopacy himself and the gentleman associated with him, in case of union with the Protestant Episcopal Church, it may be easily accounted for on Bishop White's own principles, without supposing Dr. Coke by any means to have intended to admit *the nullity of his former episcopal ordination*. Dr. Coke might, *at that time*, have thought it expedient, if a union took place, in order to gain the more, and to enlarge our field of action, to accommodate himself to the *prejudices* of those who deemed what they termed the "succession," of importance. This was precisely what Bishop White himself had proposed but a few years before, in "The Case of the Episcopal Churches Considered."—"If," said he, "such" [measures] "as have been above recommended should be adopted," [viz., admitting to the ministry by a clergyman elected as permanent president, in conjunction with other clergymen,] "and the episcopal succession afterward obtained, any *supposed* imperfections of the intermediate ordinations might, *if it were judged proper*, be supplied *without acknowledging their nullity*, by a *conditional* ordination, resembling that of *conditional baptism*." P. 17.

But *we* conjecture if Dr. Coke did hint or suggest the propriety of admitting to the episcopacy, in union with the Protestant Episcopal Church, himself and the gentleman connected with him, he either meant that they should be so admitted *without reconsecration*; or, if with reconsecration, then it was that he would submit to this for the sake of being *more extensively useful*

among those of the Protestant Episcopal Church, who might deem it of importance, in case of such a union, and not at all because he deemed it of any sort of consequence,—much less of necessity, either for himself or for the Methodists.

But we have said that Bishop White mistook the import of Dr. Coke's letter, and may possibly have equally mistaken the import of what he considered a hint in conversation. It remains to show this.

In his letter of July, 1804, Bishop White says, "The general outlines of Dr. Coke's plan were a reordination of the Methodist ministers," &c. In the letter of Sept., 1806, he expresses it thus: "His plan" [Dr. Coke's] "was, that all the ordained ministers then in the Methodist connection should receive episcopal ordination." Now let us turn to Dr. Coke's own language, as contained in his letter to Bishop White, dated April 24, 1791. "Our ordained ministers," says Dr. Coke, "*will not, OUGHT NOT, to give up their right of administering the sacraments.*" Here their then existing "*right*" to administer the sacraments is expressly asserted, and also their *obligation NOT to give it up*, being a "*right*" of a sacred character, *already vested*. The *validity* of their ordination is, in this passage, unequivocally averred. Yet Dr. Coke adds, "I don't think that the generality of them, perhaps none of them, would *refuse to submit* to a reordination, if other hinderances were removed out of the way." Now we ask, in the name of candour, if there be no difference between saying it was *Dr. Coke's plan*,—as if it had been *proposed* by him as a thing deemed necessary by himself, that all the ordained Methodist ministers should be reordained,—and his averring that they ought not to give up the "*right*" which they *previously* possessed of administering the sacraments; though he did not think that most of them, perhaps none of them, would *refuse to submit* to reordination, if their *compliance* in that respect should be the only remaining

hinderance to a union?—The difference to us is clear. And we believe it will be equally plain to every impartial and candid reader.

But we will go farther, and say, had it even been Dr. Coke's "plan" that all the ordained Methodist ministers should be reordained, in case of a union with the Protestant Episcopal Church, it could not have been because he admitted the nullity of their existing ordination, unless he palpably contradicted himself in the same breath. The principle of such a proposal, had it been made, could have been no other, from the evidence before us, than that above stated, viz., a willingness, for the sake of more extensive usefulness, to accommodate himself to the prejudices of others, when he did not believe that his doing so would be sinful. The justifiableness, and even the expediency of such a course, without admitting the nullity of former ordinations, had been previously to that time amply vindicated by Bishop White himself, in the case of the Episcopal churches. That pamphlet Dr. Coke had no doubt seen, and it is highly probable that that very work had a principal influence in inducing him to approach Bishop White particularly on that subject.

We have only to add here that whatever Dr. Coke did in this matter was his own individual act; and was neither approved of nor known by his colleague, Bishop Asbury, nor, as far as we are acquainted, by a single other Methodist minister in the United States. And that Dr. Coke himself lived long enough to see, and with his characteristic candour, to *acknowledge* that the failure of his scheme had been for the best.*

* That Dr. Coke was ardent in his temperament, and sometimes hasty and precipitate in his measures, his best friends will admit. But his candour, when convinced of an error, was a trait in his character not less predominantly striking.—At some periods of his life there is no question that he would have been willing to make even *undue sacrifices* for the sake of accomplishing a union between the body of Methodists and the Protestant Episcopal Church; and also with the Church of England. In addition to the prejudices of his

A statement on this subject, similar to that of Mr. M'Caine, was made by the Rev. Dr. Wyatt, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in a sermon published by that gentleman, in Baltimore, in the year 1820. From the correspondence of their materials, it seems pretty evident that they both drew from the same fountain; which, however, they seem to have been equally ashamed to own. That Dr. Wyatt drew from it, we think there can be little doubt: for he *adds* to the story a remarkable fabrication of his author, which we believe never before appeared any where else; and which it might have been well for Dr. Wyatt to have given that author credit for; since, in not doing so, he has taken upon himself the responsibility of asserting as a *fact* what we peremptorily deny to be such.

The author to whom we allude asserts that Dr. Coke's proposal to Bishop White was made "*with the sanction, if not actually by the order, of Mr. Wesley.*" Dr. Wyatt merely varies the phraseology a little, and asserts it was "*with the approbation, if not direction, of Mr. Wesley.*" In either shape we *deny* the statement, and demand the proof. The fact is that Mr. Wesley at that time was *dead*. And if the communication to Bishop White had been made by Dr. Coke with his approbation, and much more if by his direction, there can be

education, as a clergyman of the Church of England, it is highly probable, too, that, at the time of writing to Bishop White, neither his mind, nor perhaps, as he supposed, Mr. Wesley's, had entirely recovered from the influence of the proceedings of the Conference of 1787, in relation to the appointment of Mr. Whatcoat, and the leaving of Mr. Wesley's name off the Minutes. This state of things, according to Dr. Coke's views, may serve to account for several expressions in his letter to Bishop White, both in relation to Mr. Wesley and to Bishop Asbury. The transactions of that period of our history we shall presently explain more fully. It is sufficient to add here that whatever unfavourable impressions respecting Mr. Asbury had been produced abroad, previously to that time, he outlived them all. The affectionate assurances of confidence and union which passed between Dr. Coke and him, at the General Conference of 1796, are well remembered by several now living, who were then present. And Dr. Coke's letter to him, of Feb. 1808, quoted above, abundantly attests the same fact.

no doubt, from the open manner in which Dr. Coke unbosomed himself to Bishop White, and from the use which he *did* make of Mr. Wesley's name, that he would not have failed to mention so very important a circumstance, nor Bishop White to communicate it. In fact, justice, in this case, would have required it in Dr. Coke's defence. And we respectfully submit it to the Rev. Professor of Theology in the University of Maryland, whether attempts in this way to wound so large and respectable a body as the Methodist Episcopal Church, on *such authority*, be not more disparaging to his own sacred and elevated character than to them.

In one colouring of the matter, however, neither Mr. M'Caine nor Dr. Wyatt seems to have had the hardihood to follow up his author. That author says: "It was a *society* applying for readmission into the church, and not two equally independent bodies that were to be considered as negotiating."—"The society could and did acknowledge the church she applied to," &c. Now, as it respects any application on this subject from the *society*, as he here calls the Methodist Episcopal Church, all this is wholly false. Though, in our opinion, there is just as much truth in it as in the assertion of the same author that Dr. Coke's proposal was made with the sanction, if not by the order, of Mr. Wesley.—And this tale, we apprehend, will gain but little additional credit when it is known that it originated with one who had deserted the Methodist Episcopal Church, and joined the Protestant Episcopal Church; and after pronouncing upon that church the most fulsome and high-toned eulogies, subsequently abandoned it also, and went where all who hold such principles as he had avowed, to be consistent with themselves, ought to go—to the Papists. And thence, no doubt, looked down on Dr. Wyatt, and the whole "*schismatical*" Protestant Episcopal Church, with as much contempt as he had before arrogated to himself the right to bestow, with so much bitter haughti-

ness, upon the Methodist Episcopal Church. We mean the Rev. Mr. Kewley. And this gentleman is one of the "writers" passed off on his readers by Mr. M'Caine, among his ecclesiastical writers of "*great celebrity*!"*

Dr. Wyatt asserts, farther, that "it has been the faith of the *universal church, without exception*, until the period of the reformation, that to the order of bishops alone belongs the power of ordaining ministers: and that an ordination performed by the hands of a priest, deacon, or layman, or by any number of either, would be devoid of every degree of validity and efficacy, in conferring spiritual office and power." By bishops in this passage we understand Dr. Wyatt to mean diocesan bishops, in the high-church sense. And as he thought proper to apply his remarks to the "Methodist denomination" by name, whom he acknowledges to be "zealous and devout," whilst he excludes our whole order from any part or lot in the Christian ministry, he will excuse us for saying a few words in self-defence. *Agitur de vita et sanguine Turni.*

Dr. Wyatt has not even excepted the "exigence of necessity," which even Hooker says may "constrain to leave the usual ways of the church." The same Mr. Hooker adds, "Where the church must needs have some ordained, and neither hath nor can have possibly a bishop to ordain; in case of such necessity, the ordinary institution hath given *oftentimes*, and may give,

* Dr. Bowden, another high-church writer, in his letters to Dr. Miller, affirms that John Wesley was evidently persuaded by Coke, and two or three others, to take the step of ordaining bishops for America; and that it did not originate with himself. This will be sufficiently refuted in our section of "Testimonies of English Methodists." Dr. Bowden asserts also that Coke offered to Bishop White "to give up their spurious episcopacy," and insinuates that John Wesley acted "absolutely in contradiction to his own conviction." Dr. Bowden, however, wrote evidently in too great wrath to treat even the names of John Wesley and of Coke with common decency. Nor will the reader be surprised at his saying any thing that suited the purpose of abusing the Methodists, when informed that he copied Mr. Kewley, whose authority he had the prudence to cite.—Mr. Kewley adopted the maxim, "Throw dirt enough and some will stick:" and Dr. Bowden followed his example.

place. And therefore, we are not simply *without exception*, to urge a lineal descent of power from the apostles by continued succession of bishops, in every effectual ordination. Ecclesiastical Polity, book vii, sect. 14.

The authority of Mr. Hooker has always been ranked in the first class by high churchmen themselves ; and Dr. White, as we have before shown, asserted that the necessity of the churches in this country, about the close of the revolutionary war, was even greater than the exigence of those foreign churches to which Hooker alluded.

In the reign of Edward VI., about the year 1547, a very grave and learned assembly of select divines was called by the king's special order, for debating the settlement of things according to the word of God, and the practice of the primitive church. It consisted of Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, the archbishop of York, and many other prelates and divines of the first distinction. The account of their proceedings Dr. Stillingfleet assures us he took himself from the authentic manuscript of Archbishop Cranmer, then first published. To the questions propounded to the assembly by order of the king, those eminent divines gave in their answers severally, on paper ; which were all accurately summed up and set down by the archbishop of Canterbury himself. The following were some of the questions and answers.

Quest. 10. "Whether bishops or priests were first ; and if the priest were first, then the priest made the bishop ?"

Ans. "The bishops and priests were at one time, and were not two things, but both one office in the beginning of Christ's religion."

Quest. 13. "Whether (if it fortun'd a prince Christian, lerned, to conquer certen domynions of infidells, having none but the temporal lerned men with him) it be defended by God's law, that he and they should preche and teche the word of God there or no, and also make and constitute priests or no ?"

Ans. "It is not against God's law, but contrary *they ought indede* so to do, and *there be historyes that witnesseth* that some Christien princes and other laymen unconsecrate have done the same."—Observe, "*there be histories that witness*"—certainly before "the reformation," which was then but just begun.

Quest. 14. "Whether it be forfended by God's law, that if it so fortun'd that all the bishopps and priests were dedde, and that the word of God shuld there unpreached, the sacrament of baptisme and others unministred, the king of that region shulde make bishoppes and priests to supply the same or no?"

Ans. "It is not forbidden by God's law."*

Iren. pp. 386–393.

"If we may believe the great antiquaries of the Church of Scotland, that church was governed by their *culdei*, as they called their *presbyters*, without any bishop over them, for a long time.—*Johannes Fordonus* (De gestis Scot. lib. ii, ch. 2,) is clear and full as to their government from the time of their conversion about A. D. 263, to the coming of Palladius, A. D. 430, that they were only governed by presbyters and monks. Ante Palladii adventum habebant Scoti fidei doctores ac sacramentorum ministratores presbyteros solummodo, vel monachos ritum sequentes Ecclesiæ primitivæ." *Ibid.* p. 375.

"It is no way sufficient," says Stillingfleet, "to say that these presbyters did derive their authority from some bishops—if they had any they were only chosen from their *culdei*," (as they called their presbyters,)

* Of Archbishop Cranmer, Dr. Warner, as cited with approbation by Bishop White, says, "His equal was never yet seen in the see of Canterbury, and I will take upon me to say that his superior never will."—The two last questions and answers above are cited by Bishop White also, who adds respecting them, "The above may be offered as the opinions of not only Cranmer, but also of most of the eminent bishops and other clergy of that period." *Episcopal Churches Considered*, p. 28.

“much after the custom of the church at Alexandria, as Hector Boethius doth imply. And if we believe Philostorgius, the Gothic churches were planted and governed by presbyters for above seventy years; for so long it was from their first conversion to the time of Ulphphilas, whom he makes their first bishop.” *Ibid.*

For another instance, about the year 390, see Irenicum, p. 379,—and others in the year 452, after stating and arguing which, Dr. Stillingfleet thus concludes:—“It appears then that this power” [of ordination by presbyters] “was restrained by the laws of the church, for preserving unity in itself; but yet so that in case of necessity what was done by presbyters was not looked on as invalid.” *Ibid.* p. 381.

We have already referred to the practice of the church in Alexandria in making their bishops, for more than two hundred years. The mode in which some high-church writers attempt to explain Jerome’s account of that matter we are not unapprized of. It would be easy to show that their explanation by no means deprives us, in this case, of the authority even of Jerome: and those learned doctors, to use the language of Stillingfleet, who would persuade us that the presbyters did only make choice of the person, but the ordination was performed by other bishops, would do well *first* to tell us who and where those bishops were,—especially while Egypt remained but one province under the Præfectus Augustalis. But in proof of the correctness of our understanding of the case, we adduce the testimony of the patriarch of Alexandria himself, who expressly affirms, as we have before quoted, “That the twelve presbyters constituted by Mark, upon the vacancy of the see, did choose out of their number one to be head over the rest, and *the other eleven did lay their hands upon him and blessed him, and made him patriarch.*” The patriarch, or bishop of Alexandria, who states this, was Eutychius, whose *annals*, with several other productions of his

learned pen, are still extant, and whom Mosheim mentions as the chief example of those Egyptian writers of the tenth century, "who in genius and learning were nowise inferior to the most eminent of the Grecian literati." Mosh., vol. ii, 383, 404.

Stillingfleet understood this case as published by the most learned Selden, precisely in the same sense ; and it is evident that Archbishop Usher did also ; for when he says King Charles the First asked him at the Isle of Wight, whether he found in antiquity that *presbyters alone ordained any*, he replied, Yes ; and that he could show his majesty more, even where presbyters alone *successively ordained bishops*, and brought, as an instance of this, the presbyters of Alexandria choosing and making their own bishops, from the days of Mark till Heraclas and Dionysius, a space of more than 200 years.

But after all that Dr. Wyatt has said, it is not a little remarkable that he recognises the Lutheran Church of Sweden as a regular and valid *episcopal* church ; although, if Dr. Miller be correct, it is notorious that the first ministers who undertook to ordain in Sweden, after the introduction of the Reformation, were only presbyters ; and the Lutheran church does not scruple to admit the ordination even of *bishops* by presbyters, and indisputably disclaims any pretence of an apostolical and "divinely protected succession" of bishops, for the validity of episcopacy.

The burden of *proof* in this matter was not properly incumbent on *us* ; yet we have now adduced cases sufficient to form at least some *exceptions* to Dr. Wyatt's sweeping universal affirmative. When he shall have satisfactorily disposed of these, we may perhaps produce more.

SECTION VII.—*The Prayer Book of 1784.*

MR. M'CAINE says, "The distinction between bishops and presbyters being the foundation of the episcopal form of government, and this distinction having no existence in fact, nor in Mr. Wesley's creed, our episcopal superstructure falls to the ground," p. 19. Now we have abundantly proved, according to ecclesiastical writers of the most distinguished celebrity, that an episcopal form of government is perfectly consistent with the admission that bishops and presbyters were primarily and inherently the same order. And we have especially proved that this was Mr. Wesley's view in particular. It was ten years after he was convinced that bishops and presbyters were the same order, that he declared that he still believed the episcopal form of church government to be Scriptural and apostolical; that is, well agreeing with the practice and writings of the apostles. So far as this argument is concerned, therefore, our "episcopal superstructure" may still stand.

In another place, p. 14, Mr. M'Caine says, "It is upon the *prayer book* our episcopal mode of government is made to rest, and this is the *only* authority which is *attempted* to be produced for it." Were we disposed to adopt Mr. M'Caine's language, and to give our remarks a "serious moral bearing," we might ask, Is *this* TRUTH?

"But although it is very far from being true that the prayer book is the only authority which is at least attempted to be produced for our episcopal mode of government, yet, so far as Mr. Wesley's recommendation is concerned, we shall probably make a little more out of the prayer book than the silly witness "brought into court" by Mr. M'Caine, who was careful both to choose his witness, and to put such answers into his mouth as were to his own purpose. Such a

process a *good* cause cannot need. A bad one it might serve.

Dr. Coke's letters of ordination as a superintendent were dated Sept. 2, 1784. Mr. Wesley's preface to the first edition of his abridgment of the prayer book was dated Sept. 9, 1784, and his letter "to Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and our brethren in North America," bore date Sept. 10, of the same year. These documents, therefore, so nearly synchronous, are to be regarded, with the prayer book, as parts of one whole; and as constituting together the "little sketch" which Mr. Wesley says he had drawn up in compliance with the desire of some thousands of the inhabitants of these States. This "sketch" had direct reference to the "ecclesiastical authority" to be exercised among "our brethren in North America;" where, as he says in the sentence immediately preceding, no one then "either exercised or claimed any ecclesiastical authority at all."

Mr. M'Caine admits that the prayer book of 1784, entitled "The Sunday service of the Methodists in North America, *with other occasional services*," was printed at Mr. Wesley's own press, and sent to us by the hands of Dr. Coke. We ask, then, was not the abridging, and printing, and sending this book to us a "recommendation," even if it had contained no preface, and the term "recommend" had never been used? And was it not a recommendation of those "*other occasional services*," as well as "the Sunday service?" And for what were those other occasional services sent to us, if not to be used as a pattern in the *ordering* of our ministry? To be able to answer these questions satisfactorily, it will be necessary to observe carefully what those "other occasional services" were. It is not necessary here to name those for baptism, matrimony, the burial of the dead, &c. The following are sufficient for our purpose. At page 280 we find the forms for ordaining our ministers thus headed: "The form and

manner of making and *ordaining* of SUPERINTENDENTS, ELDERS, and DEACONS."

The first office following is entitled, "The form and manner of making of DEACONS." And the running title at the head of the page is, "*The ordaining of deacons.*"

The second office is, "The form and manner of ordaining of ELDERS." The running title is, "*The ordaining of elders.*"

The third is, "The form of ordaining of a SUPERINTENDENT." The running title is, "*The ordination of superintendents.*"

On these facts we remark :—1. It is a fair presumption that when Messrs. Whatcoat and Vasey were set apart as *elders*, and Dr. Coke as a *superintendent*, the same forms were used by Mr. Wesley himself which he abridged for us.

2. He himself expressly calls these acts "ordaining," and "ordination." The reader will notice that Mr. Wesley undeniably intended that *our* setting apart superintendents in America should be called "*ordaining*" superintendents; and "the *ordination* of superintendents." Yet when Dr. Coke was solemnly set apart by *him*, assisted by three other presbyters, Mr. M'Caine thinks we ought not to call it an ordination, and that Mr. Wesley meant no such thing!

3. If the setting apart of *superintendents*, as such, was not intended by Mr. Wesley to establish the ordination of such an order of ministers among us, neither was the setting apart of *deacons* and *elders* intended to establish *those* orders. Similar forms and solemnities were recommended for the former as for the latter. In this case, if Mr. M'Caine's arguments be conclusive, it follows as clearly that Mr. M'Caine's *eldership* has been "saddled" upon the people contrary to Mr. Wesley's intention, as that our episcopacy has been. We assert with confidence that any intelligent, candid, and impartial man, who shall examine this prayer book, will say,

either that Mr. Wesley intended to establish the ordination of an order of superintendents, to act as bishops in *fact*, though with the title of superintendents; or, that he did not intend to establish the ordination of any orders of ministers at all; and that "our fathers" utterly mistook "the whole affair."*

4. The preceding remark is confirmed by this fact. The forms recommended to us by Mr. Wesley for "ordaining of *superintendents, elders, and deacons*," are precisely similar to those used by the Church of England, and by the Protestant Episcopal Church in this country, for ordaining of "*bishops, priests, and deacons*." The only difference is, that Mr. Wesley somewhat abridged the forms, with a few verbal alterations, and substituted the title "superintendent" for "bishop," just as he did that of "elder" for "priest." So that it is plain, if by "superintendent" he did not mean that order of ministers denominated by those churches "bishops," neither by "elder" did he mean that order of ministers denominated by those churches "priests."

5. In whatever sense distinct ordinations constitute distinct orders, in the same sense Mr. Wesley certainly intended that we should have three orders. For he undeniably instituted three distinct ordinations. All the forms and solemnities requisite for the constituting of any one order, in this sense, were equally prepared and recommended by him to us for the constituting of three orders. The term "*ordain*" is derived from the Latin *ordino*, to order, to create or commission one to be a

* Mr. M'Caine's proceeding reminds us of the old Greek apologue of the eagle, which we will give in an ancient English version.

"The eagle saw her breast was wounded sore :
See stood, and weeped much, but grieved more.
But when she saw the dart was *feather'd*, said,
Wo's me ! for my own kind hath me destroy'd."

But had the eagle known that it was not only her own "kind," but her own offspring, who for the sake of winging a dart to wound his parent, had actually plucked himself to death, she would doubtless have weeped and grieved more.

public officer.—And this from *ordo*, order. And hence persons *ordained* are said to be persons in “holy orders.” And the degree of ordination stated in the “commission,” or letters of ordination, shows the degree of the orders. At the same time we maintain that a third degree of ordination is perfectly compatible with the doctrine of two orders, if the term “order” be used as implying *divine right*. This Mr. M’Caine admits. And it will appear still more clearly if we consider the nature and origin of ordination, as above stated. Lord King maintains that bishops and presbyters, in the primitive church, were the same order. Yet he expressly says that the bishops, when chosen such from among the presbyters, were *ordained*, as *bishops*, by imposition of hands. *Constitution and Discipline of the Primitive Church*, p. 49. In this respect, both Mr. Wesley’s usage and ours exactly correspond with that of the primitive church, according to Lord King, even on the principle of two orders.

6. The extension of the jurisdiction of the bishop, in consequence of the extension of the church, is not the creating of any new office, as we have shown from Stillingfleet, and certainly cannot make it less proper that he should be solemnly ordained by imposition of hands, and furnished with suitable credentials. The revival of such an itinerant, extensive personal oversight and inspection is the *revival* of the apostolic practice, and, as Mr. Wesley says, *well agrees* both with their practice and with their writings.

7. The idea that *equals* cannot from among themselves constitute an officer, who, *as an officer*, shall be superior to any of those by whom he was constituted, is contradicted by all experience and history, both civil and ecclesiastical; and equally so by common sense. The contrary is too plain to require illustration. It should be remembered, too, that Dr. Coke was ordained a superintendent, not by Mr. Wesley only, but by four

presbyters ;—two of them indisputably acknowledged as such by the whole of the Church of England, and of the Protestant Episcopal Church ; and all of them by us, and by all others, both in those and in other churches, who admit the validity of ordination by presbyters in such an exigency as that in which Mr. Whatcoat and Mr. Vasey were ordained such.—It is to be remembered also that Dr. Coke was afterward authoritatively and unanimously received in this office, by the body of preachers over whom he was to preside ; and that all these acts, in the peculiar circumstances in which Mr. Wesley's advice and help were asked, are to be taken together, as investing Dr. Coke with his "episcopal authority" among us. A similar statement might be made with respect to Mr. Asbury, only substituting his unanimous election for unanimous reception. These church officers, after they were thus constituted and commissioned *were* superior, *as our officers*, in the actual exercise of certain executive powers among us, to any individual of those by whom they were constituted.—Even Mr. Wesley could not actually station the preachers in America, after we had superintendents of our own, agreeably to his own advice ; yet Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury could. We shall hereafter prove that Mr. Wesley did not reserve to himself even the appointment of our superintendents ; and that neither did the General Conference of 1784 so understand him ; nor was he, in consequence of any act of theirs, thereafter to exercise this power.

We turn now to the *preface* of this prayer book.

This preface is signed "JOHN WESLEY," and dated, "Bristol, Sept. 9, 1784,"—only seven days after the ordination of Dr. Coke ; and was plainly intended as a preface *to the whole book*. In the first paragraph Mr. Wesley speaks in high terms of the "*Liturgy*," or "Common Prayer of the Church of England." He then states that he had made "little alteration" in this edition

of it, except omitting most of the *holy days* so called; shortening the service of the *Lord's day*; omitting some sentences in the offices of *baptism*, and for the *burial of the dead*; and leaving out many of the *psalms*, and parts of others. The enumeration of these particulars proves that by his edition of the "Liturgy" or "Common Prayer," he meant *the whole book*, with all the *offices* and *forms* contained in it, as well as the *Sunday service* and *psalms*. With this evident meaning, he says, "The following edition of it I recommend to our societies in America." Now this edition contained a form for "the ordination of *superintendents*" among us, in the same manner as *bishops* are ordained in the Church of England; with the same *solemnities*, and for the same *purposes*; viz., to *preside* over the flock of Christ, including the *presbyters* and *deacons*; and to *ordain* others. Now does it comport with good sense to say, that Mr. Wesley recommended the *form*, but not the *thing* which that form imports? And will any intelligent man pronounce that that thing is not an *episcopal* order of ministers, and an *episcopacy* in *fact*, by whatever names they may have been called? This point is so plain that we are really ashamed to dwell on it.

That we are not mistaken in the comprehensive import of the terms "Liturgy," and "Common Prayer," as above asserted, will appear from the following language of the convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, by which the liturgy of that church was ratified, on the 16th of October, in the year 1789; and also from the language of Bishops White and Brownell.

"This convention, having in this present session set forth 'A BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS AND OTHER RITES AND CEREMONIES OF THE CHURCH,' do hereby establish said *book*: and they declare it to be THE LITURGY of this church; and require that it be received as such by all the members of the same."

"The principal act of this session," says Bishop White, in his *Memoirs of the Church*, "was the preparing of the *Book of Common Prayer*, as now the established *Liturgy* of the church."

"At the convention of 1808," (says Bishop Brownell, in the introduction to the 'Family Prayer Book, or Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church,') "thirty hymns were added to the *Book of psalms and hymns*. Since which time no changes have been made in our *Liturgy*." All which proves that by "the *Liturgy*," is to be understood the whole Book of Common Prayer, with all the forms, rites, ceremonies, orders, offices, and administrations therein set forth and recommended.

A writer in another work lately suggested an inquiry whether our articles of religion also were not "surreptitiously" introduced originally, and imposed on us by the bishops. We have not the work at hand to quote verbatim, but give the sentiment as we recollect it.

If our brother will look into this prayer book of 1784, he will find our articles of religion, abridged from the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England by Mr. Wesley, printed and recommended by him in this book, and adopted, as Mr. M'Caine admits this edition of the prayer book was, by the conference of 1784. It is true the articles are not *named* in the preface. But will any one contend that *therefore* Mr. Wesley did not mean to *recommend* them to us, although they are a part of the *book* which he prepared, and printed, and sent, and recommended? Yet most certainly it would be just as rational to assert *this*, as that he did not mean to recommend to us the institution of an episcopal order of ministers, although he did prepare, and print, and send, and recommend to us a solemn form for the setting apart and ordaining of such an order.

In this prayer book, however, but twenty-four articles

will be found ; whereas we now have twenty-five. The additional one, inserted by the conference of 1784, is that now numbered the twenty-third, "Of the rulers of the United States of America." In the Sunday service Mr. Wesley inserted the form of "a prayer for the supreme rulers of these United States." But it is probable that he did not consider himself sufficiently well acquainted with our civil institutions, at that early period, to frame an "article" under this head ; and hence the addition of this article, by the conference of 1784, in conformity with the prayer of the Sunday service.

That no investigation of this sort, however strict, if conducted with a spirit of candour and fairness, can ever bring any stain on the fair escutcheon of our fathers, we are well persuaded. But if, coming from such sources, the challenging of such inquiries be connected with darkling insinuations of imposition and fraud, it cannot fail to furnish occasion to the ignorant, the disaffected, the bigoted, and the malevolent, who seek occasion against the defenceless manes of our venerated fathers ; at whose feet, while on earth, it would have been an honour to any of us, their sons, to sit ; and may yet be in heaven. On this ground, and on this only, the time, and place, and manner of these things, we cannot but regret.

The prayer book of 1784 was brought to America in *sheets*. In those copies of it which have come under our inspection, the *Minutes* of the General Conference of 1784 are bound with it. The proper place and weight of those Minutes, in this argument, will be considered in the ensuing section, in which we shall discuss the prayer book of 1786.

SECTION VIII.—*The Prayer Book of 1786.*

THIS prayer book is entitled, "The Sunday Service of the Methodists in the United States of America, with other Occasional Services." It was printed London, 1786, at the press of "Frys and Couchman." In this edition we find the twenty-five articles of religion, including that of "the rulers of the United States of America;" and also, "The General Minutes of the Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America."—Those Minutes were first printed in Philadelphia, by Charles Cist, in 1785, and were bound up with the volume of the prayer book which was brought from England, in sheets, in 1784. But in the edition of 1786 they are regularly printed *as a part of the book*. It is demonstrable on the face of the book, that the Minutes, as they appear in this edition, could not have been printed in America, and the rest of the book in England. This any printer will attest.

We have now before us a small volume, entitled "Minutes of several Conversations between the Rev. Mr. Wesley and others, from the year 1744 to the year 1789.—*London*; printed by G. Paramore, North Green, Worship-street, and sold by G. Whitfield at the Chapel, City Road, and at all the Methodist preaching-houses in town and country, 1791." By a careful comparison of these Minutes with those of the General Conference of 1784, it will be found that the latter are nearly a copy of the former, so far as they had then been drawn up and published by Mr. Wesley; with some occasional alterations adapted to our circumstances in this country; together with the insertion of some few original minutes. There is plain internal evidence in the two publications, that the Minutes previously prepared by Mr. Wesley were made the basis of those of the General Conference of 1784, and that the latter were drawn up from

the former, with such alterations, abridgments, modifications, or additions, as that conference thought necessary. And such, we are informed, was the fact. These Minutes, thus prepared from Mr. Wesley's, were the groundwork of our "Form of Discipline."

The General Conference of 1784 commenced its session on the 24th of December; and closed on the 1st of January, 1785. On the 3d of January Dr. Coke left Baltimore. From the 8th to the 19th he was in Philadelphia, and there published the Minutes of that conference, the title of which was, "The General Minutes of the Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America." And in the answer to the third question, it was declared that they had formed themselves into an "episcopal church." See Dr. Coke's Journal of the above dates, and January 22, 1785. On the 2d of June following, Dr. Coke sailed from Baltimore for England, and was present at the ensuing British Conference, which commenced in London on the 26th of July of that year. His name is signed first to an instrument which was drawn up at that conference, and which bears date July 30, 1785, and may be seen in the British Minutes of that year. Mr. Wesley was also present at that conference.—Now let the reader put all these facts together, and then candidly consider the following questions :—

1. If Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury were conscious that they had been guilty of duplicity, imposition, and fraud, or of violating Mr. Wesley's instructions, in the organization of the *Methodist Episcopal Church*, is it probable that they would immediately after have printed and published these Minutes with this title, and with an explicit statement of what had been done, and thus have exposed their acts in the face of Mr. Wesley, and of the world? Is it probable that Dr. Coke, particularly, who had the Minutes printed, would have done this, knowing that he was so soon to return to England?

2. Is it not rationally presumable that a copy of these Minutes had reached Mr. Wesley, in the interval between their publication in the middle of January and the last of July of that year, before the close of the British conference?

3. Is it not at least certain that Mr. Wesley must have felt sufficient interest in this matter, to have required from Dr. Coke a particular account of what had been done in America?

4. Is it not presumable that Dr. Coke carried with him a copy of the printed Minutes?

5. Is it not presumable that Mr. Wesley would have inquired of him whether minutes were not taken, knowing our custom to take minutes at all our conferences, and also have requested to see them?

6. Could Dr. Coke have declined to show them, or have concealed from Mr. Wesley what had been done, without the grossest duplicity and positive falsehood?

7. Is it probable that Dr. Coke was not only so knavish but so stupid, as to hazard his reputation, character, standing, and even his salvation, thus cheaply and foolishly, when he must have anticipated with certainty that Mr. Wesley would at some future time obtain a knowledge of what had been done, if he did not then?

8. If Dr. Coke could have been guilty of such baseness, is it not probable that Mr. Wesley would have received information of it from some other quarter; at least before his death, which did not take place till nearly six years afterward?

9. If Mr. Wesley had ever discovered that Dr. Coke had so grossly betrayed his trust, and imposed both on him and on us, could he have continued afterward so highly to esteem and honour him, as he notoriously did, even to the day of his death?

We know that Mr. M'Caine has represented that Mr. Wesley did punish Dr. Coke for his proceedings at this period by leaving his name off the Minutes for one year

But this is an entire mistake. At this very conference of 1785, Dr. Coke's name appears in the British Minutes in London, next after John and Charles Wesley themselves. In 1786 he was appointed by Mr. Wesley, as Mr. Crowther and Mr. Myles both state, to visit the societies in British America. And his name appears in the *Minutes published by Mr. Wesley* in the Arminian Magazine for that year, under the head "*America.*" The reason why it did not appear for that year in London, as usual, was probably because it was not expected that he would return to England till the ensuing conference, as we know he did not. Yet previously to his leaving England for America, he attended and presided in the Irish conference in the year 1786, by Mr. Wesley's direction, and *as his representative*. See Myles's Chronological History. Does this look like being then "under censure?"

In 1787 and 1788 he was again stationed in London with John and Charles Wesley. In 1789 his name was left off the Minutes; but for reasons, as we shall hereafter show, which had no shadow of connection either with his proceedings at the conference of 1784, or with his assuming the title of bishop, as Mr. M'Caine asserts. In 1790 he was again stationed in London with John and Charles Wesley; and in 1791, at the conference succeeding Mr. Wesley's death, Dr. Coke stood first in London.

In February, 1789, Mr. Wesley made his last will and testament. In that will he constituted five important trusteeships, in all of which he named Dr. Coke *first*, except one, and in that he named him second. That will Mr. Wesley kept by him for two years, and left it unaltered to the day of his death. It is surely needless to say more to prove the high estimation in which, to his last moments, he continued to hold Dr. Coke. Nor could any testimony be more honourable to the memory of Dr. Coke than such a one as this, from

a man of so much intelligence, and close and accurate observation as Mr. Wesley; and who had means of *knowing* Dr. Coke certainly ten thousand times more ample than Mr. M'Caine has ever had.

10. If Dr. Coke, on his return to England in 1785, had succeeded in deceiving Mr. Wesley, and in concealing from him the proceedings in America, is it at least probable that he would have hazarded his own exposure and utter disgrace, by *reprinting* in London the Minutes of the conference of 1784, only one year after his return, and while Mr. Wesley was on the spot? Yet this he did do, retaining in those Minutes the title of "The Methodist Episcopal Church," and declaring that our societies here had been formed into an "*episcopal* church." Our question here is, not whether Mr. Wesley ever did actually see these Minutes, or not. This we will consider presently. But whether Dr. Coke, on the supposition that he had so grossly imposed on Mr. Wesley, as above stated, could have been both so daring and so stupid as even to *hazard* his seeing them, by causing them to be republished in London during Mr. Wesley's lifetime?

11. Is it probable that this edition of the prayer book, with these Minutes in it, after being thus published in London, should have continued in existence five years, till the death of Mr. Wesley, without ever coming to his knowledge? Such a complicated machinery of fraud and villany must have been kept in operation on the part of Dr. Coke; such a combination and collusion of all parties against Mr. Wesley must have been carried on for so long a time; and such surprising ignorance must have existed on his part, for the accomplishment of all this, as is, we must confess, beyond the reach of our highest credulity.

Under all these circumstances we feel warranted in asserting that Mr. Wesley must have been acquainted with these Minutes, and consequently did know that the

societies here had been formed into an "episcopal church," with the title of "The Methodist Episcopal Church." And if he did know it, and did not promptly and explicitly state his disapprobation of it, as we affirm he never did, we have a right to regard it as conclusive proof of his sanction.

But there is yet stronger proof. In the Arminian Magazine for 1785, published by Mr. Wesley himself, we find the following minutes: "An extract from the minutes of a conference held at London, July, 1785, between the Rev. John Wesley and others." In this extract, after giving the stations of the preachers in England, Mr. Wesley, in a distinct place, adds the stations in America. In these Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury are mentioned as superintendents; and the names of all the *elders* who had been elected and ordained *at the conference of 1784* are then severally stated, together with those of Mr. Whatcoat and Mr. Vasey.

In connection with these Minutes, and in answer to the question, "What is the state of our societies in North America?" Mr. Wesley inserted also in this place the letter "To Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and our Brethren in North America;" as showing their state; and on doing so, makes this remarkable note:—"If any one is minded to dispute concerning diocesan episcopacy he may dispute; but I have better work." See Arminian Magazine, vol. viii, pp. 600-602. From the terms and connection of this note it is highly probable that he had been charged with having instituted such an episcopacy in America, and refused to *dispute* about it; preferring rather to go on with his *work*. But if he knew that he had done no such thing, and intended no such thing;—and much more, if he had been indignant at such an idea, as Mr. M'Caine would represent, he would simply and flatly have denied the charge, and repelled the statement. And with this charge against him too, there

is the greater certainty that it was then known there through Dr. Coke, or the minutes of the conference of 1784, that such an episcopacy had actually been established in America.*

Assuming the fact then that Mr. Wesley did, at some time and in some way, become acquainted with the acts and proceedings of Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, and of the conference of 1784, in the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we ask, Where is the evidence that he ever disavowed them? or ever declared that in so doing they had gone contrary to his instructions? Where is the evidence that he ever objected to that title of the church, or to the terms "episcopal" and "episcopacy?" Where is the evidence that he ever protested or remonstrated against either of these, or against our adoption of the "episcopal" form of church government, under the direction of superintendents, elders, and deacons? If Mr. Wesley knew that all this had been done "surreptitiously" and fraudulently; and much more, if he knew that it had been imposed and "saddled" on the societies against his intentions, and under the cloak and sanction of his name, would he not have declared it? Would it not have been his *duty* to declare it? and may we not be well assured that he would have done so, from the plainness and decision with which we know that he was accustomed to speak; and particularly at a time when he was personally charged and pressed by his brother Charles and others, for having thus "acted as a bishop," as we know he was. Yet we deny that one syllable of such evidence has ever yet been produced. To the terms "episcopal" and "episcopacy,"—to our being called the "Methodist Episcopal Church," or having adopted the "episcopal" form of church government, Mr. Wesley never did

* A diocesan episcopacy is simply an episcopacy extending beyond the superintendence of a single congregation. A diocese is a circuit or a bishop's jurisdiction, whether large or small.

object; and we challenge the production of one particle of testimony to show that he ever did.—What Mr. M'Caine has said with regard to his letter to Bishop Asbury respecting the title "bishop," we shall distinctly discuss in another place, and shall prove that it does not in the slightest degree impugn what we have now asserted.

But Mr. M'Caine says, p. 17, "The circumstance" of this edition of the prayer book "being printed by Frys and Couchman, and not by Mr. Wesley, renders the whole affair suspicious." That "it was printed for somebody—perhaps for Dr. Coke, who in 1786 was under censure by Mr. Wesley for the address he presented to General Washington,"—"and contains an article of religion not contained in Mr. Wesley's prayer book."

It is really surprising with what uniformity Mr. M'Caine persists in the plainest errors; familiarizing his mind with "suspicion" in the utter absence of proof; withholding circumstances which would explain what he wraps in "mystery;" and exposing himself to a severity of criticism from which, did justice to our subject and to the dead permit, we would fain forbear.

The address to Washington we shall notice hereafter. The article of religion contained in the prayer book of 1786 which was not in that of 1784 is that now numbered the 23d,—“Of the Rulers of the United States of America,” which had been adopted by the General Conference of 1784, and was most properly inserted in the ensuing edition of the prayer book of 1786. Had Mr. M'Caine stated this, all mystery respecting the addition of this article would have been dissipated.—It was not necessary that this prayer book should have been printed at Mr. Wesley's press. It was not printed for Mr. Wesley, nor for the Methodists in England; but for those in the United States, of whom Dr. Coke was a superintendent. Dr. Coke was possessed of an ample

fortune, and with a liberality amounting almost to profuseness, devoted his fortune to such expenses, and to any others which he believed calculated to serve the cause in which he was engaged. He had procured the printing of the Minutes previously in Philadelphia, and now published another edition of this prayer book, with the minutes and articles of religion included, for the Methodists in America. Frys and Couchman had been in the habit of printing for Mr. Wesley, and were the printers of the second volume of the Arminian Magazine. And we can perceive nothing in this whole affair calculated to render it in the least degree "suspicious" to any but a mind habituated to a suspiciousness which spares not the characters even of men who have been among the brightest ornaments of the Christian church, and as distinguished for their high sense of honour and propriety as for their liberality and deep devotion.

Mr. M'Caine adds, "After the publication of the prayer book of 1786, a rule was passed in the conference that no book should be sold among his societies" [Mr. Wesley's] "which was not printed at his press. But whether this rule was passed with special reference to the prayer book of 1786, or not," he adds, "we cannot say." That is, a prayer book for the Methodists "in the United States of America," with a prayer for "the Rulers of the United States of America," and an article of religion acknowledging these rulers, and Mr. M'Caine could not say whether it was not intended for sale among the societies in *England*; and whether Mr. Wesley and the British conference did not find it necessary gravely to pass a resolution prohibiting the sale of it there!

But on this point Mr. M'Caine has suffered his speculations to carry him beyond his mark. He "cannot say" that this resolution was not "passed with special reference to the prayer book of 1786." If it were,

Mr. Wesley must have had knowledge of that prayer book. And if he had, then all the inferences which we have drawn above are amply confirmed and stand in full force.

SECTION IX.—*Bishop Asbury.*

OUR reverence for the name and for the character of Mr. Wesley is unfeigned and profound. We have never felt free, however, to claim for him absolute infallibility ; or an incapableness of being led, on any occasion, or in any circumstances, to use even too strong an expression.

That his letter to Mr. Asbury, on suffering himself to be called bishop, contains expressions too severe, will be admitted, we think, by his warmest friends. Mr. M'Caine, indeed, rejoices over it as one who has found great spoil. He seems delighted with it. Yet the discerning reader will perceive that, after all, in summing up in his "conclusion," he has wholly misrepresented its import. "Let the name of bishop and the episcopal office as it now exists among us," says he, "be put away for ever. In doing this, we shall comply with Mr. Wesley's advice to Mr. Asbury. For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this." To what?—To "the episcopal *office*?" We deny that Mr. Wesley ever advised any such thing, or ever meant, or intended so to be understood. It was to the term "bishop" solely that he objected, from the associations ordinarily connected with it in the public mind, especially in England. To the "office" he never did object ; nor to the terms "episcopacy" or "episcopal." The office was of his own creation, and he intended it to be perpetuated. And will Mr. M'Caine contend that if the "office," as it now exists, or was originally instituted, had been con-

tinued from the beginning, as it was for several years, with the title of superintendent, that the church would have been any less episcopal, in form or in fact, or its superintendents any less bishops? The logic by which this should be made out would be a curiosity.*

That our views of this letter correspond with those of Mr. Wesley's biographer, and his intimate companion and friend, the venerable Henry Moore, who gave publicity to the letter, will appear from the following quotations.

"Mr. Wesley," says Mr. Moore, "well knew the difference between the *office* and the *title*. He knew and felt the arduous duties and the high responsibility which attach to the one, and the comparative nothingness of the other." Life of Wesley, vol. ii, p. 278.

"He gave to those ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΙ," [*episcopoi*, bishops,] "whom he ordained, the modest, but highly expressive title of *superintendents*, and desired that no other might be used." Ibid., p. 280. His objection to the title "bishop," Mr. Moore adds, "arose from his hatred of all display."

Mr. Asbury was of opinion that the "unpleasant expressions" in some of the letters which he received from his venerable friend were "occasioned by the misrepre-

* On Dr. Coke's return to England after the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he was attacked by an anonymous writer, supposed to have been Mr. Charles Wesley. In his defence he affirmed, that in his proceedings in America, "he did nothing but by a delegated power which he received from Mr. Wesley." This he affirmed publicly, under Mr. Wesley's eye; and at a time when there is every reason to believe that Mr. Wesley had seen the *Minutes* of the conference of 1784. "On this ground," says Mr. Drew, "it cannot be denied, that his plea of delegated authority is valid, Mr. Wesley and himself being identified together." Life of Dr. Coke, p. 101.

Mr. M'Caine asserts, p. 16, that in the progress of his work "documents will be found, which unequivocally declare his" [Mr. Wesley's] "disapprobation of the proceedings of the conference" [of 1784] "in relation to every thing appertaining to episcopacy." This assertion we wholly deny. Not one such document is found in his whole work. The mere title of bishop, to which Mr. Wesley did object, was not the act of the conference of 1784; nor is it at all necessary to the existence of "episcopacy," which might exist as well without as with it; and did so exist for several years.

sentations of others. Yet he bore them with a meekness which has obtained for him the commendation of Mr. Wesley's own biographer, who was satisfied that Mr. Asbury "was not convinced that he had acted wrong, and lost none of his veneration for his father in the gospel [Mr. Wesley] on this occasion." It is manifest, indeed, that Mr. Moore himself was of opinion that Mr. Wesley, in this affair, had expressed himself too strongly, and rather inconsistently with his former admissions. "But did he not," says Mr. Moore, "upon this occasion, a little forget what he had written in his address to the societies in America after their separation from the mother country: 'They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive church; and we judge it best that they should stand fast in the liberty wherewith God has so strangely made them free.' But the association in his mind between the assumed *title* and the *display* connected with it in the latter ages of the church, was too strong. He could not, at that moment, separate the plain, laborious bishops of the American societies, where there is no legal establishment, from the dignified prelates of the mighty empire of Great Britain.

"That our brethren who are in that office," continues Mr. Moore, "are true Scriptural bishops, I have no doubt at all: nor do I wish that the title should be relinquished, as it is grown into use, and is known by every person in the United States, to designate men distinguished only by their simplicity and abundant labours." *Life of Wesley*, vol. ii, pp. 286, 287.

These extracts are full to our purpose, and surely have as much weight as any thing that has been said by Mr. M'Caine.

At the British conference held in Liverpool, in 1820, we heard the profoundly learned Dr. Adam Clarke, and that most able and eloquent divine, the Rev. Richard Watson, express themselves publicly before the confer-

ence in relation to our episcopacy, to the same effect, as a true, actual, Scriptural episcopacy, of the most genuine and apostolical character.

Mr. M'Caine protests against loading the name and memory of Mr. Wesley with the obloquy of intending the episcopal form of church government for the American societies, while he so strongly opposed the use of the title bishop. But we put the question to every man of candour :—Did not Mr. Wesley recommend and institute for the American societies a general superintendency, by ministers solemnly set apart for the purpose, with imposition of hands and prayer, and all the usual solemnities of ordination, and possessing the powers of ordination, and all others usually considered episcopal? And will any man deny that such a form of government would have been episcopal, and such general superintendents bishops, though the title bishop and episcopal had never been used?

Mr. Wesley's biographer, Mr. Moore, clearly held this view of the subject; and certainly considered the assertion of it as far from loading Mr. Wesley's name or character with obloquy. We aver then that Mr. Wesley did intend the "*thing*" episcopacy, for the American societies, but not the title *bishop*. We do not say he "*secretly*" intended it. This is a term used by Mr. M'Caine, not by us. There was neither secret nor "mystery" in it. Mr. Wesley plainly and openly declared it, and solemnly confirmed it by his act and deed, attested by his hand and seal, and published to the world.*

We have maintained the position that Mr. Wesley did

* When the title "bishop" was introduced into the Minutes, it was sanctioned by the conference, as meaning precisely the same thing with superintendent.

Mr. M'Caine says, (p. 38,) "It is somewhat remarkable, that *as soon as Mr. Wesley's name was left out of the Minutes*, the term bishop was introduced into them." Now he had just said, (p. 36,) "his name was left off the Minutes of 1785." Yet the title bishop was not introduced into the Minutes till 1788. Why this inconsistency in the course of two pages?

in *fact* intend and recommend for the American societies the episcopal form of church government. Mr. M'Caine admits that Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and our fathers, so asserted. If so, then he must also admit that they so *understood* Mr. Wesley; and in that case they cannot be blamed for acting and speaking according to their understanding. Or, if he will not admit this, then he must charge them either with a "mysterious" stupidity, or with knowingly asserting wilful falsehoods, and "surreptitiously" introducing, for the gratification of their ambition, a form of government, "imposed upon the societies under the sanction of Mr. Wesley's name," though they themselves did not understand Mr. Wesley to intend or to recommend any such thing! Yet Mr. M'Caine says, (p. 56,) that Mr. Asbury "was a great, wise, good, and useful minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, having few to equal him." How is all this to be reconciled? And if we believe all that Mr. M'Caine has either directly imputed to Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, or plainly enough insinuated, of their fraudulent practices, for the concealment and the establishment of their forgeries and impositions, who can envy either their wisdom or their goodness?

Mr. M'Caine seems determined, in fact, to involve the whole of the proceedings of those times in a charge of disingenuousness and duplicity, irreconcilable with either wisdom or goodness; and such as could spring from nothing but corrupt and bad motives. "Indeed," he says, p. 36, "there is a mystery hanging over the whole of the proceedings of those times, if there is not a *studied* obscurity and evasion in the records of the church." And he does not stop short of insinuating, if not of roundly asserting, that *records* and *dates* were altered and falsified for the accomplishment of the same base purposes.

Alas! what a friend have the venerable dead found in Mr. M'Caine. He has "*great veneration*" for their

memory! Yet, while he salutes, he stabs them. He kisses, and straightway leads them to be crucified.

If by such means they did indeed introduce into the church an "illegitimate episcopacy," hazarding every thing fair and honourable for the sake of the title of "Methodist bishops," they must indeed, to use Mr. M'Caine's language, have been "strongly infected with an episcopal mania." And nothing but *mania*, on such a supposition, can afford a solution of their wickedness and folly.

In the conclusion of Mr. Wesley's letter to Mr. Asbury on assuming the title of bishop, Mr. M'Caine thinks there is a "mystery" unintelligible without an explanatory key; which he of course furnishes to suit his purpose. Mr. Wesley says, "Let the Presbyterians do what they please, but let the Methodists know their calling better." Now, says Mr. M'Caine, "What connection has this sentence with the rest of his letter? We perceive none." But *we* perceive a very plain connection; and one perfectly "intelligible," without any other "explanatory key" than that of a simple attention to the subject, and a knowledge of the views of the Presbyterians in relation to it. The subject was a Methodist minister's allowing himself to be called bishop—Now the Presbyterians do allow this. "In the form of government of the Presbyterian Church the pastors of churches are expressly styled bishops, and this title is recommended to be retained as both Scriptural and appropriate." Miller's Letters, p. 9. "Let the Presbyterians," says Mr. Wesley, "do what they please, but let the Methodists know their calling better."—Who does not perceive the plain connection?

Again, Mr. M'Caine says, pp. 39, 40, "Mr. Asbury had said he would not receive any person deputed by Mr. Wesley to take any part of the superintendency of the work intrusted to him. Yet neither he nor the conference refused to receive Dr. Coke. Indeed to have

shown the least symptom of opposition either to Mr. Wesley or to Dr. Coke, *at this juncture*, would have been to prevent the accomplishment of the most ardent wishes of Mr. Asbury and the preachers. It would have been to dash the cup from their lips when they were upon the very point of tasting its sweets. No opposition, *therefore*, was made. No resistance was offered. Every thing went on smoothly ; and whether from prudence or policy, inclination or interest, Dr. Coke was received as a superintendent, and Mr. Wesley's authority acknowledged and respected. But—scarcely had Mr. Asbury begun to exercise the functions of his new office, when Mr. Wesley's authority was rejected, and his name left out of the Minutes.”—What ideas Mr. M'Caine attaches to the terms “wise” and “good,” we do not certainly know. But how he can call Mr. Asbury wise and good, in the very same work in which he continually paints him in such colours, upon any principles of ethics which we have ever studied, is beyond our comprehension.

When the conference of 1784 said they judged it expedient to form themselves into a separate and independent church, Mr. M'Caine affirms that they meant that they did then “separate from Mr. Wesley and the English Methodists ;” and adds, “in accordance with this declaration his name was struck off the Minutes of conference.” Yet the fact is, that that same conference acknowledged themselves Mr. Wesley's sons in the gospel, ready in matters belonging to church government to obey his commands ; and recorded his name on their Minutes with this declaration, and left it so recorded : and in the face of this Mr. M'Caine makes the above assertion.*

* We had imagined that these singular ideas were perfectly novel ones of Mr. M'Caine's ; till we discovered the same in one of Mr. Hammett's pamphlets.

It was more than two years after the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church before Mr. Wesley's name was left off the Minutes, in the proper sense of that phrase ; and it was not done by Mr. Asbury, nor by the conference of 1784. This will be explained hereafter.

The absurdity of his interpretation of this subject, and the true meaning of the phrase "separate and independent church," as used by the conference of 1784, will farther appear from the following testimonies.

The first native American travelling preacher was the late venerable Wm. Watters. In his memoirs written by himself, under the date 1777, he says, "In fact we considered ourselves at this time as belonging to the Church of England, *it being before our separation, and our becoming a regularly formed church,*" p. 57. Again: "Dec. 25, 1784.—We became, *instead of a religious society,* a separate church under the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church." *Ibid.*, p. 102.

"From the year 1769 to the year 1784 the Methodists were regular members of the Church of England. *Since 1784 the Methodists in America have been independent of the English Church, and have had an episcopacy of their own.*" Rev. Nicholas Snethen's Reply to J. O'Kelly's Apol., p. 61.

Dr. Coke, in the sermon which he preached in Baltimore, on the ordination of Bishop Asbury, expressed the same sentiments, in these terms, "The Church of England, of which the society of Methodists in general have till lately professed themselves a part."—And in his letter to Bishop White he expressly calls the separation spoken of "our plan of separation from the Church of England."

The Rev. Ezekiel Cooper was present at the first meeting of Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury in America; one of "the most solemn, interesting, and affectionate meetings," he declares, "which he has ever witnessed." At that meeting the sacrament of the Lord's supper was first administered among the Methodists in this country by their own ministers. At that meeting he first partook of that ordinance, and then first consented to enter into the itinerant connection. And from that time to the present, no man among us, probably, has ever more

studiously and thoroughly acquainted himself with every thing relating to Methodism, and to its origin and history, and especially to the origin and history of the Methodist episcopacy, than Mr. Cooper. It will probably be admitted, too, that few, if any, among us are more capable of investigating such subjects ; or have had more ample opportunities and means of searching into them critically and closely. We shall, therefore, avail ourselves of his testimony with confidence : and the more so, as it is well known that he did not in all things agree with Mr. Asbury on some points of ecclesiastical polity. Yet he had, notwithstanding, a heart, as well as a head, to appreciate and to honour both his conduct and his motives.

"The conference met," says Mr. Cooper, "Dec., 1784. It was unanimously agreed that circumstances made it expedient for the Methodist societies in America to become a *separate body from the Church of England*, of which, until then, they had been considered as members." Cooper on Asbury, p. 108.*

"From that time," (14th Nov., 1784,) says Mr. Cooper again, "I have had a particular and intimate knowledge of Francis Asbury, and the manner of his life. We have had a confidential intercourse, an intimate friendship, and union of heart. I am confidently persuaded, to take him all and in all, that no man in America ever came up to his standard. I have known him *well*, and I have known him *long*. Most excellent man ; who can but admire him with reverence ? His eye appeared to be always single, and his whole body, soul, and example

* It will be observed that what was considered the Episcopal Church, in this country, both during and for some time after the revolutionary war, was still usually spoken of as the Church of England ; although, strictly speaking, the Church of England had ceased to exist in the United States from the time of the declaration of our independence. It was in this common acceptance of the phrase that all the writers of those times whom we quote, used it. And even to this day it is known that the Protestant Episcopal Church is sometimes called the Church of England.

full of light. The *purpose* of man is essentially connected with his manner of life. The word *purpose* signifies the design and motive of the heart in our actions. Now what was the design, the motive, the object, the end, or the purpose of the venerable Bishop Asbury? Examine his whole deportment and conduct—retrospect and investigate his public and private life. Look into all his movements and transactions. We have had the most indubitable evidences of the honest sincerity and strict integrity of his soul, and the purity and uprightness of his designs, intentions, and motives. Next to his brother Charles, no man stood higher in the esteem and confidence of Mr. Wesley than Dr. Coke; and in America no man stood so high with him as Mr. Asbury." *Ibid.*, pp. 134, 135.

This is the testimony of no sycophant, flatterer, or dependant. It is the honourable and faithful testimony of one intimately acquainted with the parties; who had nothing to hope or to fear; and who rendered his testimony after their death; whose only object was truth, and justice to the dead; and who was himself well acquainted with the mind of Mr. Wesley, having been one of his correspondents, and received from him the last letter that he ever wrote to America.

Had the conduct of Mr. Asbury been regarded by Mr. Wesley in the serious moral bearing in which Mr. M'Caine has represented it, it is impossible that a man of Mr. Wesley's discernment, and high sense of honour and propriety, could have continued to hold him in the high esteem in which we have the most satisfactory evidence that he did.

Mr. Asbury always believed that some things respecting him had been unfairly represented to Mr. Wesley; and we think that Mr. M'Caine himself has furnished documents (though for a very different purpose) which tend strongly to confirm this impression. He quotes a letter from Dr. Coke to Mr. Wesley, dated August 9,

1784, in which are these words, "Mr. Brackenbury informed me at Leeds that he saw a letter in London from Mr. Asbury, in which he observed, 'that he would not receive any person deputed by you to take any part of the superintendency of the work invested in him, or words evidently implying so much.'" Now we think this account is sufficiently refuted by the unhesitating, the open, and the exceedingly affectionate manner in which Mr. Asbury did receive and welcome Dr. Coke, immediately on his arrival. This has been attested by Mr. Cooper, who was an eye and ear witness. Indeed, Mr. Cooper affirms that so touchingly tender and affecting was the scene, that he can never forget it. It was in full view of a large concourse of people,—a crowded congregation at a quarterly meeting,—and the whole assembly, as if divinely struck, burst into a flood of tears. If all this, on the part of Mr. Asbury, was dissimulation and hypocrisy, concealing under such a show the internal resistance which he felt to the reception of a coadjutor from Mr. Wesley, lest he should "dash the cup from his lips, when upon the point of tasting its sweets," then, indeed, does his memory deserve to be branded with infamy. Mr. Brackenbury doubtless said what he thought,—yet how easily might he have been mistaken in the recollection of the expressions of a letter, when undertaking to recite them from memory at such a distance? How easily might he have mistaken their meaning? Indeed, he himself gives evidence of a want of clearness of recollection as to the exact expressions of that letter; for he adds, "*or words evidently implying so much.*" And we know well that a very small, and even undesigned variation of expression, may very materially alter the sense. We have already seen an instance of this in the case of Dr. Coke's letter to Bishop White. The import of that letter has been clearly misunderstood, though with the letter itself in hand. Had we before us, also, the letter of Mr. Asbury,

to which Mr. Brackenbury alluded, we might perhaps be able to show some equal mistake. We object, therefore, to this parol, third-handed report; and unless the document itself be produced, we protest against the statement.

In another letter, dated Oct. 31, 1789, Mr. M'Caine (p. 47) represents Mr. Wesley as saying of Mr. Asbury, "He flatly refused to receive Mr. Whatcoat in the character I sent him." Now this could not have been.—Mr. Asbury had no power, of himself, to refuse to receive Mr. Whatcoat. It was the *conference* that refused to receive him. If the conference had received him, Mr. Asbury would have been obliged to do so also, or himself to have left the superintendency.*

Again; in this same letter Mr. Wesley is represented as saying, "He" [Mr. Asbury] "told George Shadford, Mr. Wesley and I are like Cesar and Pompey—he will bear no equal, and I will bear no superior." Now let it be remembered that George Shadford left America early in 1778. At that time Mr. Asbury had been in this country himself but a few years, and was then in the most critical and perilous circumstances in the heat of the revolutionary struggle, doubtful of his own safety, and of the fate of the Methodist societies. And can we believe that even then, or at any period still earlier, he seriously made such a speech to George Shadford, declaring himself the rival of Mr. Wesley, and not brooking even his superiority, as Pompey would not brook Cesar's?—Credat Judæus Apelles. It was known and acknowledged, both by Mr. Asbury and every other preacher, that his place and office at that time was not that of Mr. Wesley's equal or rival, but

* That Mr. Asbury *did not refuse to receive Mr. Whatcoat*, we shall, in another place, demonstrate by the most indubitable evidence. It is proper, however, to add here, that it was not from personal objections to Mr. Whatcoat that the conference did not then receive him as a superintendent; but for reasons which will be hereafter stated. They did at a subsequent conference elect him.

of his assistant. Or, if this speech is alleged to have been made before Mr. Rankin left America, then at that period he was not even Mr. Wesley's assistant, but subject also to Mr. Rankin.

But how happens it that Mr. M'Caine has told us nothing more about this letter? Why did he not state to whom it was written, and from what authority he received it? Had he not sufficient ground to be "suspicious" of this "whole affair?" Did he not derive it from one whom he knew to have been an avowed, bitter, and personal *enemy* of Bishop Asbury;—one who laboured to distract and rend our infant church;—who was formally expelled from the British connection; and was directly charged by Dr. Coke with the grossest calumny and falsehood? The documents in proof of all this are in our possession. Yet it is from such sources that Mr. M'Caine has picked up, and, after the parties are all dead, has published calumnies which had been long since silenced and buried in merited oblivion. And we here assert, that if his publication be stripped of the materials which he has derived from such sources, and from the obsolete pamphlets of Mr. Kewley, Mr. Hammett, Mr. O'Kelly, and other separatists, and troulbers of our Israel, very little original matter will be found in his whole production; except, indeed, the amplifications and the deeper tincture which their long refuted aspersions have received from his pen; and the advantage which he has taken of the lapse of time and the silence which death has imposed on the accused, to impute to them unheard-of frauds and forgeries, which in their lifetime no man living had the effrontery even to insinuate. The aforesaid noted letter bears on the face of it marks of corruption or of fabrication. And until better authority is produced for it, or the document itself, we hold it unentitled to one particle of credit.

Again, in the letter with which Mr. M'Caine seems to

be so much pleased, Mr. Wesley says to Mr. Asbury, "I study to be *little*, you study to be *great*; I *creep*, you *strut* along. I found a school, you a *college*." It will be recollected that this letter was written in the year after what has been called the leaving of Mr. Wesley's name off the Minutes; and at a period when even his great and excellent mind had not, perhaps, entirely recovered from that occurrence. It is known, too, that there were individuals unfriendly to Mr. Asbury, who represented him unfairly to Mr. Wesley. The Rev. Ezekiel Cooper himself intimated to Mr. Wesley the injustice of such representations; and he thinks Mr. Wesley had allusion to this in the last letter which he wrote to him, just before his death. But had Mr. Wesley been in America, and himself witnessed Mr. Asbury's manner of life, from the commencement of his ministry among us to its close, would he have expressed himself thus? We believe he would not. The testimony of the most intelligent, observing, and competent eye-witnesses, who watched him narrowly, and saw him and knew him intimately, in all situations and circumstances, in private and in public, for more than thirty years, is vastly different.

To the testimony of Mr. Cooper, already adduced, we add the following:—

"It is scarcely necessary to mention, what must be so obvious, that in performing his astonishing annual tours, and in attending to all the vast variety of his Christian, ministerial, and episcopal duties and callings, he must have been almost continually on the move. Flying, as it were, like the angel through the earth, preaching the everlasting gospel, no season, no weather stopped him. Through winter's cold and summer's heat he pressed on. He was often in the tempest and the storm; in rain, snow, and hail; in hunger, thirst, weariness, and afflictions. Sometimes uncomfortable entertainment, with hard lodging, and unkind treatment.

'I *soar*,' said Mr. Asbury himself, 'but it is over the tops of the highest mountains.'—Then to the distant and remote settlements, traversing solitary and gloomy valleys; crossing and recrossing dangerous waters; administering the word of life in lonely cottages, to the poor and destitute; sleeping upon the *floor*, or on beds of *straw*, or not much better, in houses of logs, covered with barks of trees, or wooden slabs; sometimes lodging in the wilderness and open air, with the earth for his bed and the sky for his canopy, surrounded by ravenous beasts and fierce savages. He knew how to abound among the wealthy, and how to endure hardship and want among the poor. This was his *manner of life*, to spend and be spent, in going about from place to place, like his Master and the disciples of old, in doing good. He *cheerfully* and *willingly* condescended to men of low estate. Even the poor *African race*, in bondage and wretchedness, were not neglected by him. He attended to their forlorn condition, and taught them the way of life and salvation. When among the great, the honourable, and the rich, he manifested humility in prosperity; maintaining, at the same time, a dignified independence of spirit, *without exaltation*. When among the poor and lower classes of society, he showed a courteous condescension, and manifested content and patience in adversity. He went on through good report and through evil report, among the rich, the poor, the wise, and the unwise:—*at all times*, among *all people*, in *all places*, and upon *all occasions*, his aim was to promote the cause of God; to be instrumental to the good of man, and to the salvation of precious souls."—Cooper on Asbury, pp. 113–117.

Such is the testimony of Mr. Cooper. And who that reads it, and venerates the memory of the departed Asbury, will not exclaim, O, thou man of God, who could so have abused the ear of the aged Wesley, thy venerable friend, as to have induced from him such

reproof? But the meekness of conscious innocence with which Mr. Asbury received it, excites our admiration, not less than the mingled emotions which must be produced in every generous breast at the unkindness with which Mr. M'Caine yet pursues him in the grave.

With regard to the part which Mr. Asbury acted in founding a "*college*," Mr. Wesley was equally misinformed. This matter has been placed in its true light by Mr. Asbury himself, as Mr. M'Caine might have seen in his Journal. After the college was founded, he certainly did all in his power to support it. And when it was burned in December, 1795, he remarks, "Would any man give me £10,000 per year, to do and suffer again what I have done for that house, I would not do it." But that it was not founded by *him*, he explicitly affirms in these words, "*I wished only for schools.*" It is true, Dr. Coke wanted a college. And the whole head and front of Mr. Asbury's offending is, that he yielded to the wishes of his colleague and his senior in office, and co-operated with him.

Mr. Asbury's favourite plan was that of "*district schools.*" These he recommended to the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church: and, in the year 1791, prepared an address recommending them. Mr. Lee represents this address as having been drawn up in 1793. This, however, is a mistake. It may be found in the Minutes for 1791, and is dated, "Near Salem, New-Jersey, Sept. 16, 1791." Had this plan been generally adopted, the great wisdom and excellence of it would have been felt to this day.

With regard to the naming of Cokesbury College, we believe Mr. Asbury had no hand in it. It was done at the conference held in Baltimore, in June, 1785. When it was proposed to name the college, different names were proposed, such as New Kingswood, and others, after places in England. Some proposed to call it Coke College, and others Asbury College. On which

Dr. Coke, to end the discussion, suggested that they might unite those names, and call it Cokesbury; which was done. These facts we have derived from persons who were present at that conference. He that can make a crime out of them must use his pleasure.

The fact is, that Cokesbury College, so called, was really no more than a school, on the plan of Kingswood. This was the plan agreed on between Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, and is so stated by Dr. Coke in his Journal of Nov. 14, 1784. The institution never was incorporated as a college. This was in contemplation; but before a charter was obtained, the destruction of the building by fire terminated the existence of the whole establishment.

We may well say then with the late Rev. John Dickens: "Mr. Asbury does not bear a character like many others, so superficial as not to admit of examination beneath its surface; but, like fine gold, the more it is *scrutinized*, the more its *intrinsic worth* appears: therefore they who have *most thoroughly investigated* his character, both as a Christian and a minister, admire it most." Remarks on W. Hammett, p. 6.

The following is the testimony of the Rev. Nicholas Snethen:—

"For nearly thirty years, he" [Mr. Asbury] "has travelled, with a delicate and disordered constitution, through almost all the inhabited parts of the United States. Nothing but the wild, uncultivated wilderness could fix his bounds. Wherever there were souls to be saved, he has endeavoured to extend his labours. But they have not been such as are endured by the ordinary minister. He has not only laboured incessantly in the word and doctrine, he has been in perils in the wilderness,—in perils *among false brethren*—in journeyings often—in weariness and painfulness—in watchings often—in hunger and thirst—in fastings often—in cold and nakedness. *From the first day he set foot upon*

American ground, unto the present hour, he has never been known to seek the honour that cometh from men; nor can any man accuse him of indulging the flesh, or seeking the pomp and vanity of this world. We have never known him to spend one day more than was strictly necessary in any city or town upon the continent. We have observed that he never waits for a solicitation to visit the frontiers: but we have frequently, after we have endeavoured to dissuade him from these painful and hazardous journeys, looked after him with anxious solicitude, expecting never to see his face again. If Mr. O'Kelly and Mr. H. wish to know what it is that disposes the Methodist preachers to give such a preference to this Englishman, we answer: "It is not his native country,—it is not merely because he is a bishop; we think nothing of bare titles; but our preference is founded in a knowledge of the man, and his communication. We have tried him in all things, and we have always found him faithful to the trust reposed in him by us. In him we see an example of daily labour, suffering, and self-denial worthy the imitation of the young preacher. In a word, we have every reason to esteem him as a father, and not one reason to suspect or discard him as a tyrant or despot." Reply to Mr. O'Kelly, p. 51.

SECTION X.—*Testimonies of English Methodists.*

MR. M'CAINE says, p. 31, "Neither are the ordinations which he" [Mr. Wesley] "conferred, viewed by writers among the English Methodists, who wrote in justification of Mr. Wesley's right to ordain, as favouring our title to episcopacy." And in support of this assertion, he quotes a passage from the English Methodist Magazine for 1825, which states that Mr. Wesley

“gave up episcopal ordination *as understood by high churchmen*,” and established the “validity of presbyterian ordination.” But who ever disputed this? Are not both these propositions as clearly maintained by the Methodist Episcopal Church as by our brethren of the British Connection? That any “contrary statement coming from our book agents” in this country, has ever been made or published, is an assertion wholly unfounded.

On the character of our episcopacy we have already stated the sentiments of Dr. Adam Clarke, and of the Rev. Richard Watson. We have also quoted a passage from the Rev. Henry Moore, the intimate friend of Mr. Wesley, and his faithful biographer, in which he says of our bishops: “That our brethren who are in that office are true Scriptural bishops, *I have no doubt at all*; nor do I wish that the title should be relinquished.” *Life of Wesley*, vol. ii, p. 287.

To these testimonies we add the following, from the Rev. Jonathan Crowther, author of the *Portraiture of Methodism*.

“Peace being now established with the United States; and Mr. Asbury and the other preachers having been instrumental of a great revival during the war, solicited” [Mr. Wesley] “to send them help. Hence, in February this year” [1784] “he called Dr. Coke into his chamber, and spoke to him nearly as follows: That as the American brethren wanted a form of discipline, and ministerial aid; and as he ever wished to keep to the Bible, and as near to primitive Christianity as he could, he had always admired the Alexandrian mode of ordaining bishops. The presbyters of that great apostolical church would never allow any foreign bishop to interfere in their ordinations: but on the death of a bishop, for two hundred years, till the time of Dionysius, they ordained one of their own body, and by the imposition of their own hands. Adding withal, that he

wished the doctor to go over and establish that mode among the American Methodists.

“All this was quite new to the doctor. The idea of an Alexandrian ordination was at first somewhat revolting to his prejudices. However, being about to set out for Scotland, he weighed the subject for two months, and then wrote his entire approbation of the plan. Accordingly, he was ordained bishop, and brothers Whatcoat and Vasey presbyters.” Second English edition, pp. 412, 413.

The same statement is made by the Rev. Joseph Sutcliffe, an eminent Wesleyan Methodist minister, in his “Short Memoirs of Thomas Coke, LL. D.” This work was republished by Daniel Hitt and Thomas Ware, in 1815.

But Mr. M'Caine relies on the English Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, and quotes the volume for 1825. Let us see, then, how this work supports him. That same volume contains a “Review of the Rev. Henry Moore’s Life of Rev. John Wesley,” in which we think we recognise the style of one of the most eminent men in the British connection. The following interesting passages, extracted from it, are as clearly and as fully to our purpose as if they had been written for us.

“The author,” says the reviewer of Mr. Moore, “has spent some time in showing that episcopacy, by *name*, was not introduced into the American Methodist society by the sanction of Mr. Wesley, who, though he in point of *fact* did ordain *bishops* for the American societies, intended them to be called ‘*superintendents*.’ To the statement of this as an historical fact, no objection certainly lies; but the way in which it is enlarged upon, and the insertion of an oburgatory letter from Mr. Wesley to Mr. Asbury on the subject,—can have no tendency but to convey to the reader an impression somewhat unfavourable to Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, as though they were ambitious of show and title. Mr.

Moore, indeed, candidly enough relieves this, by admitting that, *on Mr. Wesley's principle itself*, and *in his own view*, they were true Scriptural *episcopoi*, and that Mr. Wesley's objection to the *name*, in fact, arose from its association in his mind rather with the adventitious honours which accompany it in church establishments, than with the simplicity and pre-eminence of labour, care, and privation, which it has from the first exhibited in America, and from which it could not from circumstances depart. According to this showing, the objection was grounded upon no principle, and was a mere matter of taste or expediency.—Whether the *name* had or had not the sanction of Mr. Wesley, is now of *the least possible consequence*, as *the episcopacy itself* WAS OF HIS CREATING.” English Wesleyan Methodist Magazine for 1825, p. 183.

Clearer testimonies from the most eminent English Methodists, we could not desire: and we cheerfully submit it to the reader whether such men as these were not likely to be as well acquainted with the subject as Mr M'Caine; and whether their judgment be not a sufficient counterpoise to his?

In addition to the above, however, we have now before us a London edition of Dr. Coke's Journal, with a preface dated, “City Road, London, Jan. 25, 1790;” accompanied with a dedication “To the Rev. Mr. Wesley.” In this dedication Dr. Coke states that he had found in Mr. Wesley “a father and a friend for thirteen years.” If we compare this with the period at which Dr. Coke became connected with Mr. Wesley, which was between Aug. 1776 and Aug. 1777, it will just bring us down to the date of the preface; and this date, too, is in that very year [conference year] in which Dr. Coke's name was left off the British Minutes. It is hardly to be presumed, then, that Dr. Coke would, at that period particularly, have published and *dedicated* to Mr. Wesley, as his father and friend, what he knew to

be denied by Mr. Wesley, and to be peculiarly offensive to him. Yet in these very Journals, page 106, Dr. Coke says, *and said it to Mr. Wesley*, "On the 9th of March" [1789] "we began our conference in Georgia. Here we agreed (as we have ever since in each of the conferences) that Mr. Wesley's name should be inserted at the head of our Small Minutes, and also in our Form of Discipline.—In the Small Minutes as the fountain of our EPISCOPAL office; and in the Form of Discipline as the father of the whole work, under the Divine guidance. To this all the conferences have cheerfully and unanimously agreed." Now where is the evidence that Mr. Wesley ever "remonstrated" against this, or expressed the slightest displeasure at it? On the contrary, considering the circumstances then existing, is it not absolutely preposterous to believe that Dr. Coke would have *dedicated* such a statement to him, if he had not had the best reasons to believe that it would meet his approbation? This statement also completely refutes the insinuation that the American conferences possessed any disposition to treat Mr. Wesley with disrespect or "contempt;" much less to "excommunicate" him! It may serve to satisfy another writer, also, what is meant in the Minutes of 1789, by saying that Mr. Wesley, Dr. Coke, and Mr. Asbury exercised the episcopal office "by regular order and succession." The intention was simply to acknowledge Mr. Wesley's *precedence*. To guard against any other construction, a *note* is added to that observation in the Minutes, referring to another place, in which the idea of the fabulous apostolical succession is expressly resisted by the bishops themselves.

SECTION XI.—*Dr. Coke.*

MR. M'CAINE states that the manner in which the doctor discharged the duties of the new office he was appointed to fill, and the title of bishop which he assumed, in connection with Mr. Asbury in their joint address to General Washington, "president of the American congress," involved him in difficulties with Mr. Wesley and the British conference; and that Mr. Wesley called him to an account for his conduct, and punished him by leaving his name out of the Minutes for one year.

As Mr. M'Caine professes to make the authority of Mr. Drew the basis of his account of this affair, we shall first take it up on his own ground, and shall show, from his own authority, that had he presented the subject fully, as Mr. Drew has done, instead of exposing Dr. Coke to reproach, it would demand for him, from us, both our admiration and our veneration.

According to Mr. Drew, the charge alleged against Dr. Coke in the British conference, was neither "the manner in which he discharged the duties of the new office he was appointed to fill," nor his having assumed "the title of bishop:" but simply, that he, *being a British subject*, had expressed to General Washington sentiments, *in relation to the American revolution*, which, *as a British subject*, they conceived he ought not to have expressed. Mr. Drew, though himself a British subject, has vindicated both the conduct and the motives of Dr. Coke on that occasion, with a triumphant ability which leaves us nothing to add. A few fuller extracts from the same pages from which Mr. M'Caine took his, will place the subject in the fair and candid light in which it is regarded by Dr. Coke's more magnanimous biographer.

"It is well known," says Mr. Drew, "that in the

unhappy contest between Great Britain and America, Mr. Wesley very warmly espoused the cause of England, and reprobated the conduct of the colonists. This circumstance placed the Methodists in a very suspicious light in the eyes of the Americans. The contest was indeed now brought to an issue. But although the tempest had subsided, the agitation which it occasioned still continued, and the waves were occasionally heard to beat upon the shore. The suspicions, therefore, which the Methodists incurred, it was incumbent on them to wipe away. The citizens thought it their duty to rally around the infant government, and to express their approbation of the principles which had been adopted. Among these citizens the different religious sects presented their addresses. Amidst these examples, and under the peculiar circumstances in which the Methodists were placed, it was scarcely possible for them to avoid making a similar acknowledgment without incurring the vengeance of their foes. Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury having assumed the character of bishops, were in the eyes of all the acknowledged head of the American Methodists : and no address could be considered as official unless it bore their signatures, as the organ of the body. Thus circumstanced, an address was drawn up, and signed by Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, in behalf of the American Methodists, and presented to General Washington.

“Dr. Coke had both a private and a public consistency of character to sustain. As a subject of Great Britain, tenacious of the consistency of his personal actions, prudence would have directed him not to sign. But as a minister of Jesus Christ, as filling an official station in the Methodist societies, and as a superintendent in America, the welfare of the gospel commanded him to promote its interests, and to leave all private considerations as unworthy of bearing the name of rival. Between these alternatives he made a noble choice, and

acted upon an *exalted principle*, to which none but superior spirits can aspire. He has taught us by his magnanimous example that

‘Private respects to public weal must yield,’

and that personal reputation was no longer his when the interests of Christianity demanded the costly sacrifice. By walking on this vast and comprehensive circle, he has encircled his name with wreaths of laurel, which will continue to flourish, when the sigh of smiling pity, and of sneering condolence can be no longer heard. Those who still continue to censure his conduct on the present occasion, now the mists of prejudice are done away, and all the consequences of each alternative appear in their proper bearings, plainly tell us how they would have acted under similar circumstances, if, like him, they had been called to feel the touch of Ithuriel’s spear.

“A copy of this address was introduced” [into the British conference] “as a ground of censure against the doctor. It was urged against him, that, as a subject of Great Britain, it was inconsistent with his character to sign the address. That several expressions therein contained, in favour of the American government, implied a severe reflection on our own,” [the British,] “and could not justly have been used by a British subject.—That, as a member of the Methodist society in England, and a leading character in the connection, his conduct was calculated to provoke the indignation of *government*,—and finally, that the address itself was a *tacit impeachment of Mr. Wesley’s political sentiments*, and tended to place the whole body of Methodists” [in England] “in a very equivocal and suspicious light.

“Dr. Coke heard these charges urged against him
IN PROFOUND SILENCE.

“Under these circumstances, as some decisive steps were necessary to be taken in this critical affair, it was

finally determined that the name of Dr. Coke should be omitted in the Minutes for the succeeding year. This prudent resolution had the desired effect, and the business of conference proceeded and terminated in peace.

“But this silent mark of disapprobation, as was evident from the effects which followed, was on the whole more *nominal* than *real*. The doctor *still maintained his rank in Mr. Wesley’s affectionate regard, and continued to retain those offices which he had hitherto filled*. At the conclusion of the conference he proceeded as though nothing disagreeable had occurred, travelling through the societies in the same manner as he had travelled before he went to America.” Drew’s Life of Dr. Coke, pp. 102–145.

Such was the “punishment” then of Dr. Coke. Such the cause that led to it. Such the “profound silence” with which he heard the charge, and the Regulus-like magnanimity and self-devotion with which he acted, for the sake of beloved America and of American Methodists. And shall they forget him; or now remember him only to stain him with dishonour! “O tell *this* not in Gath.”

It will be observed that Mr. M’Caine repeatedly asserts that the address to General Washington, by Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, was presented in the year 1785. Now in that address they styled themselves bishops. We ask then, according to Mr. M’Caine’s dates, why was it that neither Mr. Wesley nor the British conference did *then* object to that title, or censure Dr. Coke for it? Mr. M’Caine, indeed, says his assuming that title in that address was a ground of the omission of his name in the British Minutes. This we deny. It is an assertion wholly gratuitous, and unsupported by one particle of testimony. But if that address was presented to General Washington in 1785, it follows that Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury had taken the title of bishops three years previously to the introduction of it into the Minutes, and without censure. This title was not intro-

duced into the Minutes till 1788 ; nor was Mr. Wesley's oburgatory letter to Mr. Asbury written till September, 1788. And though Dr. Coke was completely in Mr. Wesley's power during this interval, yet it does not appear that he inflicted on him the smallest penalty. Can Mr. M'Caine explain all this, and still assert that the address was presented to General Washington in 1785 ?

But, on the hypothesis of Mr. M'Caine's dates, there is something still more curious in this affair. He maintains that the address to General Washington was presented before Dr. Coke left the United States in 1785 ; that it was published in the newspapers ; and that a copy of it was introduced into the British conference, as a ground of censure against the doctor, on his return to England in that same year.

Now, supposing these facts, is it not a singular conjecture that Mr. Asbury or his friends, in order to screen *him* also from "punishment," or with any other motive, should have "changed the date of this address," and published it with an "altered" date, four years later than the true one, if it had been published in the *newspapers four years before* with its true date, carried across the Atlantic, and laid before Mr. Wesley, the British conference, and the world ! In other words, that Mr. Asbury or his friends, from any motive, should have committed such a stupid forgery in the falsification of an official document, when both he and they must have known that the means of their exposure were so notorious that their detection and conviction would be inevitable ? For it will be recollected that the parties were then all living, and the circumstances all recent ; and matters of public notoriety. From what principle so vile an insinuation could proceed, on ground not only so futile, but so perfectly and manifestly absurd, the reader must form his own conclusion.

It will by no means excuse Mr. M'Caine to say that

he does not directly assert "by whom this thing was done." Every reader of his work cannot but consider Mr. Asbury, or his friends, or both, as implicated. The "History and Mystery" of the "Episcopacy" of those days was his subject; and the application is so plain that he who runs may read. Besides, by whomsoever it was done, Mr. Asbury must either have been privy to it, or certainly have known it afterward, and Dr. Coke also. And on this ground, at all events, they stand implicated by this insinuation, in the guilt of having at least countenanced and concealed an act of such criminality and baseness.

SECTION XII.—*Methodist Episcopacy.*

THE following views of our episcopacy were those of the bishops themselves, as contained in the notes of the Discipline prepared by Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, at the request of the General Conference.

"The most bigoted devotees to religious establishments (the clergy of the church of Rome excepted*) are now ashamed to support the doctrine of the apostolic, uninterrupted succession of bishops,—and yet nothing but an apostolic, uninterrupted succession can possibly confine the right of episcopacy to any particular church." And "the idea of an apostolic succession being exploded, it follows that the Methodist Church has every thing which is Scriptural and essential to justify its episcopacy." Ed. 1798, pp. 6, 7.

"Nor must we omit to observe" [speaking of primitive episcopacy] "that each diocess had a college of elders or presbyters, in which the bishop presided. So

* Perhaps a few others, who still claim a very near relationship to Rome, ought to have been included in this exception.

that the bishop by no means superintended his diocese in a despotic manner, but was rather the chief executor of those regulations which were made in the college of presbyters." *Ibid.*, 8.

Nothing has been introduced into Methodism by the present episcopal form of government which was not before fully exercised by Mr. Wesley.—But the authority of Mr. Wesley and that of the bishops in America differ in the following points :

"1. Mr. Wesley was the patron of all the Methodist pulpits in Great Britain and Ireland for life, the sole right of nomination being invested in him by all the deeds of settlement.—But the bishops in America possess no such power. The property of the preaching houses is invested in the *trustees*, and the right of *nomination to the pulpits* in the *General Conference*, and in such as the *General Conference* shall from time to time appoint.* Here, then, lies the grand difference between Mr. Wesley's authority, in the present instance, and that of our American bishops. The former, as (under God) the father of the connection, was allowed to have the *sole, legal, independent* nomination of preachers to all the chapels; the latter are *entirely dependant* on the *General Conference*." *Ibid.*, 40, 41.

"But why does the General Conference lodge the power of stationing the preachers in the episcopacy? We answer, On account of their entire confidence in it. If ever, through improper conduct, it loses that confidence in any considerable degree, the General Conference will, upon evidence given, in a proportionable degree, take from it this branch of its authority. But if ever it betrays a spirit of tyranny or partiality, and *this* can be proved before the General Conference, the whole will be taken from it: and we pray God that in

* With this before our eyes, is it not strange that any candid writer should attempt to excite odium against the bishops, by representing our churches as "bishops' property?"

such case the power may be invested in other hands." *Ibid.*, 41.

"And we verily believe, that if our episcopacy should at any time, through tyrannical or immoral conduct, come under the severe censure of the General Conference, the members thereof would see it highly for the glory of God to preserve the present form, and only to change the men." *Ibid.*, 42.

"2. Mr. Wesley, as the venerable founder (under God) of the whole Methodist society, governed without any responsibility whatever ;—but the American bishops are as responsible as any of the preachers. They are *perfectly subject* to the General Conference." *Ibid.*, 42. The words "*entirely dependant*" and "*perfectly subject*" are printed in Italics by the bishops themselves, to invite our particular attention to this acknowledged fact.

After naming one other point of comparison between the powers of Mr. Wesley and those of our bishops, viz., in the entire management of all the conference funds, which he possessed, and they do not; the bishops thus conclude :—

"We have drawn this comparison between our venerable father and the American bishops, to show to the world that they possess not, and, we may add, they aim not to possess, that power which he exercised, and had a right to exercise, as the father of the connection ;—that, on the contrary, they are *perfectly dependant* ; that their power, their usefulness, themselves, are *entirely at the mercy of the General Conference*." *Ibid.*, 43, 44.

Now what more can we desire than such acknowledgments and declarations, freely and voluntarily made by the bishops themselves? And with what propriety, in the face of them, can our episcopacy be denominated an "absolute episcopacy ;" or the bishops our "masters."

The power of stationing the preachers is certainly a great and weighty power, for the due and faithful exercise of which the bishops should be carefully and watch-

fully held to a strict responsibility. But it is a power vested in them by the preachers themselves, and as liable to be modified, or to be wholly taken from them, whenever the body of preachers shall judge such a measure expedient or necessary. The weight of this power rests upon the itinerant preachers. But surely, they of all men have the least right to complain of it, since the vesting of it, and the continuing of it in the bishops, is their own voluntary act and choice. They have submitted, and continue to submit to it, often, doubtless, with many and great inconveniences and sacrifices, because they have believed it most efficient, with an itinerant ministry, for the spread of the gospel and for the good of the church. And it is believed that our members, with very few exceptions, have always been of the same opinion.

The bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church have no control whatever over the decisions of either a general or an annual conference. Whereas the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church have an *absolute negative* in their general conventions, and no act whatever can be passed in their church without the consent of the house of bishops, though it might even be unanimously agreed to, and ardently desired by the whole body, both of the clergy and laity; a power certainly greatly superior to any power possessed by the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Another evidence of the dependance of our bishops on the General Conference is, that if they cease to travel without the consent of that body, they become immediately incapable of exercising among us any episcopal or other ministerial function. In other words, as the bishops in their notes interpret this part of our Discipline, they "are obliged to travel till the General Conference pronounces them worn out or superannuated;" a restriction which, as they justly remark, is not to be found in any other episcopal church.

Again: a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church cannot ordain a single individual, except in the mode prescribed by the General Conference, by the vote and direction of an annual conference.

In the notes on the Discipline, Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury did indeed claim the right, on their responsibility to God, binding them to "lay hands suddenly on no man," to "suspend the ordination of an elected person," if such reasons appeared clearly against it that they *could not proceed with a good conscience*. But they, at the same time, acknowledged the necessity and the obligation of great caution in the exercise of this claim. And we are not aware that a single instance of the actual exercise of it has ever yet occurred since the organization of our church. That cases might occur, and that facts might take place or come to light, even after the election of individuals for orders, in which it would be the conscientious *duty* of a bishop to suspend proceeding in the ordination, there can be few persons so unreasonable as not to admit. And how the claim of this right to "suspend" an ordination in such a case can be represented as censurable on the part of the bishops, as it has been by a late writer, we do not understand. It is, in fact, expressly required of them by the Discipline:—"If any crime or impediment be objected, *the bishop shall surcease* from ordaining that person, until such time as the party accused shall be found clear of the crime."—See the form of ordaining both deacons and elders.

The late Rev. *John Dickens*, in his remarks on the proceedings of Mr. Hammett, says, in relation to the superiority of our bishops, as derived not from their "separate ordination," but from the suffrages of the body of ministers,—“Pray, when was it otherwise?”—and “how can the conference have power to remove Mr. Asbury and ordain another to fill his place, if they see it necessary, on any other ground?” Mr. Hammett

had said, "Let your superintendents know therefore,—that their superiority is derived from your suffrages, and not by virtue of a separate ordination. Gain and establish this point, and you sap the foundation of all arbitrary power in your church for ever." Mr. Dickens replies, "Now who ever said the superiority of the bishops was by virtue of a separate ordination? If this gave them their superiority, how came they to be removable by the conference? If then what you there plead for will sap the foundation of all arbitrary power, it has been sapped in our connection from the first establishment of our constitution," p. 31. Again he remarks, p. 32, "We all know Mr. Asbury derived his official power from the conference, and therefore his office is at their disposal." "Mr. Asbury," he says in another place, "was thus chosen by the conference, both before and after he was ordained a bishop; and he is still considered as the person of their choice, by being responsible to the conference, who have power to remove him, and fill his place with another, if they see it necessary. And as he is liable every year to be removed, he may be considered as their annual choice," p. 15. The high standing of John Dickens is too well known to need any statement of it here. He was also the particular and most intimate friend of Bishop Asbury. And the pamphlet containing the above sentiments was published by the unanimous request of the conference held at Philadelphia, Sept. 5, 1792; and may be therefore considered as expressing the views both of that conference and of Bishop Asbury in relation to the true and original character of Methodist episcopacy. It may be confidently affirmed then, that the Methodist episcopacy, if preserved on its original basis, as it ever should be, has as little independent power as the episcopacy of any other episcopal church whatever.

SECTION XIII.—*Title Bishop.*

EPISCOPOS, (Greek,)—episcopus, (Latin,)—a bishop, or overseer. The Hebrew *pakod*, as the Greek *episcopos*, whence the Anglo-Saxon *bischop*, and our English word *bishop*,—is any man that hath a charge and office for any business, civil or ecclesiastical. It is derived from *ἐπι*, (*epi*,) *super*, and *σκοπεῖν*, (*skopein*,) *intendere*, *superintendere*, to *superintend*. And hence *superintendent*, from the Latin, is of precisely the same import as *bishop* from the Greek.—“Inter πρεσβυτερον, tamen, et Επισκοπον, hoc interest : πρεσβυτερος nomen est ordinis : Επισκοπος nomen in illo ordine officii.” Between bishop and presbyter there is nevertheless this difference. Presbyter is the name of an *order*. Bishop is the name of an *office* in that order. See Leigh’s *Critica Sacra*.

Originally, “the name *ἐπισκοποι*,” [*episcopoi*, bishops,] given “to the governors of the church under the gospel,” was “a name importing *duty* more than *honour*; and not a title above *presbyter*.” *Irenicum*, p. 286.

We say then, with the Rev. Asa Shinn, that “intelligent Christians, before they either vindicate or vilify a simple name, will inquire into its precise signification.” We have done so with regard to our term *bishop*. And the inquiry conducts us to the conclusion, that it may be vindicated, but cannot be justly vilified.

The following is the Rev. Nicholas Snethen’s account of the introduction of the term *bishop*, in addressing our superintendents.

Mr. O’Kelly had asserted that “about the year 1787, Francis directed the preachers, whenever they wrote to him, to title him *bishop*.” Mr. Snethen replies, that among Mr. Asbury’s acquaintance the assertion sufficiently refutes itself, and that no one who has ever known the man can possibly give it credit for a moment; and adds,

“Some time after ordination was introduced among us, several of the ministers altered the inscription of their letters to each other from ‘Mr.’ to ‘Rev.’ Some were dissatisfied: they thought that it savoured more of pride than of piety; others had more serious scruples, and even doubted whether it were not impious to address men in a style and title given to Jehovah himself, as in Psalm cxi, 9: ‘Holy and *reverend* is his name.’ In the conference for 1787, this was made a subject of conversation, for the sake of those of scrupulous consciences. The conference advised that every one should use his own choice; and that those who doubted the propriety of *Reverend* might give the simple name, with the official character, as *bishop*, *elder*, or *deacon*. It was not thought proper to expose this little circumstance in print.” Reply to James O’Kelly, pp. 10, 11.

The same liberty still exists. No man is obliged to style our general superintendents bishops. Any that choose to retain the original title of superintendent are perfectly at liberty to do so, whether in writing or otherwise. By some the latter title is still most generally used; and by most, if not by all of us, it is frequently used, without scruple, as synonymous with bishop; and not only equally proper but equally respectful. Indeed, according to Mr. Snethen’s statement, the conference of 1787 seem to have considered the title bishop less exceptionable to scrupulous consciences than that of *Reverend*; and advised the use of the former by those who scrupled the propriety of using the latter. Yet this title *Reverend*, we have not understood that Mr. M’Caine himself has ever declined; nor some other gentlemen of our modern days, who war with titles much less august.

Mr. M’Caine, p. 42, quotes “a writer,” who states that, “in 1786 Mr. Asbury proposed to Mr. Wesley three persons to be appointed bishops for the United States, to act under Mr. Asbury.” Mr. Wesley’s answer, he

says, is worthy to be engraven in characters of gold. It was, he states,—“During my life there shall be no *archbishops* in the Methodist Church. But send me the man of your choice, and I shall have him appointed *joint superintendent* with you.” Now, admitting this statement, we ask, in the name of common sense, if what we maintain is not here confessed: viz., that Mr. Wesley himself considered the term “superintendent” as synonymous with *bishop*? Why did he refuse to appoint a superintendent to act *under* Mr. Asbury? Because this would have been making Mr. Asbury an *archbishop*; that is, a bishop over bishops. Of course the superintendent under him would have been a bishop. According to this statement, then, as *archsuperintendent* means *archbishop*, it necessarily follows, that “*joint superintendent*” means *joint bishop*, and *superintendent* simply *bishop*.

The following extract of a letter from the late Rev. and venerable Wm. Watters, will shed farther light on this subject.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“That there should be those who through prejudice think the Methodists, since they have had bishops among them, are quite a different people, is not strange. But is it not strange that those who have known them from the beginning should admit such a thought, till they have investigated the matter thoroughly? All must know that names do not alter the nature of things. We have from the beginning had one among us who has superintended the whole work. At first this person was solely appointed by Mr. Wesley, and called the general assistant: at a time when there were none but European preachers on the continent. But why was the name of general assistant ever changed? All that will open their eyes may know why. The Methodists in England and in America formerly did not call them-

selves a particular church ; but a religious society in connection with different churches, but mostly with the Episcopal Church. After the revolutionary war the Episcopal clergy became very scarce, and in far the greatest number of our societies we had no way of receiving the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper. It was this that led many of our preachers, as you well know, to take upon them the administration of the ordinances. Mr. Rankin, who was our first general assistant, after staying the time in this country he came for, returned home. This was at a time when we had no intercourse with England, and Mr. Asbury, the only old preacher that determined (in those perilous times) to give up his parents, country, and all his natural connections, was finally and unanimously chosen by the preachers (assembled in conference) our general assistant. He continued such until the year 1784, when the doctor came over, and not only the name of general assistant was changed to that of superintendent, but we formed ourselves into a separate church. This change was proposed to us by Mr. Wesley, after we had craved his advice on the subject ; but could not take effect till adopted by us ; which was done in a deliberate, formal manner, at a conference called for that purpose, in which there was not one dissenting voice. Every one of any discernment must see from Mr. Wesley's circular letter on this occasion, as well as from every part of our mode of church government, that we openly and avowedly declared ourselves episcopalians ; though the doctor and Mr. Asbury were called superintendents. After a few years the name, from superintendent, was changed to bishop. But from first to last, the business of general assistant, superintendent, or bishop has been the same ; only since we have become a distinct church, he has, with the assistance of two or three elders, ordained our ministers ; whose business it is to preside in our conferences, and in case of an equal

division on a question, he has the casting vote; but in no instance whatever has he a negative, as you are told. He has also the stationing of all the travelling preachers, under certain limitations; which power, as it is given him by the General Conference, so it can be lessened or taken from him at any time conference sees fit.* But while he superintends the whole work, he cannot interfere with the particular charge of any of the preachers in their stations. To see that the preachers fill their places with propriety, and to understand the state of every station or circuit, that he may the better make the appointment of the preachers is, no doubt, no small part of his duty; but he has nothing to do with receiving, censuring, or excluding members; this belongs wholly to the stationed preacher and members." *Memoirs*, p. 103.

Mr. M'Caine, p. 34, reproaches our fathers with entering Mr. Wesley in the Minutes of 1789 as a "bishop,"—"after it was known that the very term was so extremely offensive to him." This is not correct. They did enter him as exercising "the episcopal *office*." But they did not entitle him "bishop." The former was not offensive to him. He well knew the distinction between the *title* and the *office*. The latter he did exercise, and asserted his right to exercise it. And we have already shown, from the extract of Dr. Coke's Journals, that the statement of his having been so entered in the American Minutes was published in England in Mr. Wesley's lifetime, and dedicated to himself. This gave him no offence. On the contrary, when pressed concerning his "acting as a bishop," he did not deny, but justified it, and answered, "I firmly believe that I am a

* As our General Conferences were originally constituted, they possessed the power of our whole body of ministers. Whenever the powers of the present delegated General Conference are spoken of in this work, it is of course to be understood agreeably to the principles of the restrictive limitations.

Scriptural *episcopos*, as much as any man in England or in Europe. For the *uninterrupted succession* I know to be a fable, which no man ever did or can prove." Letter to the Rev. — on the Church. Works, vol. xvi, English edition.

SECTION XIV.—*Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church.*

OUR argument has hitherto been conducted on the ground that Mr. Wesley did institute, and did intend to institute, under the title of superintendents, an episcopacy for the American Methodists; and that by Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and our fathers, it was so, honestly and in good faith, understood. And in this we are well satisfied that the candid and intelligent reader will agree.

But leaving out of view, for argument's sake, the commendation of Mr. Wesley altogether, we are still prepared, in the circumstances which then existed, to defend the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Had Mr. Asbury been actuated by the dishonourable motives of ambition and self-aggrandizement imputed to him, how easy had it been for him to have accomplished his purpose, and to have organized a church in America, with himself at its head, independently of Mr. Wesley and of the whole European connection. And what plausible pretext or occasion did he want? Early in the revolutionary struggle every other English preacher had fled. He alone, through the contest, devoted himself to American Methodism, at the risk and hazard of every thing dear. Mr. Wesley himself had openly and publicly espoused the royal cause against the colonies. This greatly embarrassed the American Methodists, and

especially the preachers, who were watched, and hunted, and imprisoned, and beaten, as his emissaries; and, through him, as the *disguised* emissaries of Great Britain. The societies, except in very few instances, were destitute of the sacraments. They could neither obtain baptism for their children, nor the Lord's supper for themselves. On this account, as early as 1778, Mr. Asbury was earnestly importuned to take measures that the Methodists might enjoy the same privileges as other churches. He resisted the proposal. Yet so serious was the crisis, that a large number of the preachers, to satisfy the urgent necessities of the societies, chose from among themselves three senior brethren, who ordained others by the imposition of their hands. Among these were some of the ablest and most influential men then in the connection. Surely no man ever had a fairer or a more plausible opportunity than Mr. Asbury then had, to organize and to place himself at the head of the Methodist Church in America, independently of Mr. Wesley. Yet it was he who, with the late venerable Watters, Garrettson, and others, resolutely remained in connection with Mr. Wesley; and rested not till by his indefatigable labours the whole of the seceding body were brought back, to await and to abide by Mr. Wesley's advice. And this is the same man who, after his death, is now charged with the vilest dissimulation and hypocrisy, and with violating the obligations both of "honour" and of "truth," for the sake of organizing a church, separate from and independent of Mr. Wesley, with himself at its head in conjunction with another!

Dr. Coke was appointed and set apart by Mr. Wesley, aided by other presbyters, as a general superintendent of the American Methodists. In that character he was *unanimously received* by the American conference, and with their consent was to exercise episcopal powers among them, and to act as a bishop, though called a superintendent.

Mr. Asbury was unanimously chosen by the same conference, to be a general superintendent conjointly with Dr. Coke. He was first ordained deacon and elder, and then superintendent, agreeably to the unanimous voice of the conference, by Dr. Coke, a presbyter of the Church of England, and Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, who had been previously ordained presbyters by Mr. Wesley, Dr. Coke, and Mr. Creighton, presbyters of the Church of England; with the assistance of Mr. Otterbine, a presbyter of the German Reformed Church.

The intention of the conference was, that Mr. Asbury also should exercise episcopal powers, and act as a bishop, though to be called a superintendent; and the church was then, and thenceforth, called the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Admitting the validity of ordination by presbyters, and that, in such an exigency, they may even ordain bishops, such as are contended for in these pages, as we have shown they may, on what ground is the Methodist episcopacy, thus understood, and thus instituted, in such circumstances to be pronounced "illegitimate," unlawful? It is true Mr. M'Caine persuades himself "that the impartial, intelligent, and pious of other denominations" will so pronounce it. And he has certainly done all in his power to induce them to do so; and not only "the intelligent and pious" of other denominations, but the bigoted and prejudiced of every description, and especially the avowed enemies of the Methodist Church; separatists, and such as have been expelled from her communion; the restless and dissatisfied within it; and the enemies of Christianity in general. To such Mr. M'Caine's book has doubtless afforded a high gratification. But if there be any law, divine or human, prohibiting or proscribing such an episcopacy, let it be produced. Let the edict itself be shown, and let not any man think us impertinent if, in demanding the produc-

tion of it, we require that the terms of the edict be very express and positive.

If this matter be pressed still farther, we then insist that the unanimous election and appointing of the first Methodist bishops was of itself sufficient, in the circumstances then existing, to constitute a valid episcopacy, according to the judgment of Archbishop Cranmer, and those divines who concurred with him, as stated by Stillingfleet. And let those who maintain that any other authority was indispensable to its legitimacy, produce their warrant. And let them remember beforehand that we are not to be governed by tradition.

If it be objected that those proceedings took place among the preachers only, we answer: This was undeniably in accordance with the original principle on which the Methodist societies had been gathered, and united by the preachers, who determined on what principles of discipline and of administration they would devote themselves to take charge of, to guide, and to serve those who, *upon these principles*, chose to place themselves under their care, and especially upon what principles they could feel themselves at liberty to administer to them the ordinances.

If there were any law of God or man making this "illegitimate," unlawful, on the part of the preachers, let this edict also be produced. In the days of "the fathers" and of the *founders* of Methodism, at all events, both in Europe and in America, we hazard the assertion that these were principles recognised and acquiesced in by the Methodist *people* also. That it necessarily follows, however, from these premises, that any modification of this system in all after time, and in any change of circumstances, is absolutely precluded, is what we do not here mean to say. Nor is that a field into which our present subject requires us at all to enter.

But leaving out of view, for the present, any circumstances which might be collected of the divine appro-

bation of the proceedings of the conference of 1784, from the great and signal blessings which followed upon the labours of the preachers, and the special prosperity of the work from that time, we will conclude this part of our subject with an argument which, with some of our opponents, perhaps, may have more weight.

We maintain, then, that the proceedings of that conference in organizing the "Methodist Episcopal Church," with general superintendents, vested with episcopal powers, and intended to act as bishops, were in *fact*, if not in *form*, approved and sanctioned by the people, the Methodist people, of that day. And that the preachers set apart at that conference, in their appropriate and respective characters, as deacons, elders, and superintendents or bishops, were freely and cordially received and greeted by the people as such; and the sacraments gladly accepted, as they had long been urgently demanded, at their hands. Our proofs follow.

"The Methodists were pretty generally pleased at our becoming a church; and *heartily united together, in the plan which the conference had adopted. And from that time religion greatly revived.*" Lee's History, p. 107.

"25th December, 1784. We became, instead of a religious society, a separate church, under the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This change gave *great satisfaction through all our societies.*" William Watters' Memoirs, by Himself, p. 102.

"The conference met December, 1784. It was unanimously agreed that circumstances made it expedient for the Methodist societies in America to become a separate body from the Church of England. They also resolved to take the title, and to be known in future by the name of The Methodist Episcopal Church. They made the episcopal office elective,—Mr. Asbury was unanimously elected, and Dr. Coke was also unanimously received, jointly with him, to be the superintendents, or bishops, of the *Methodist Episcopal Church.*

From that time the Methodist societies in the United States became an independent church, under the episcopal mode and form of government. *This step met with general approbation, both among the preachers and the members.* Perhaps we shall seldom find such *unanimity* of sentiment upon any question of such magnitude." Rev. Ezekiel Cooper on Asbury, pp. 108, 109.

Of those who were members of the church at that period, very few are now living. And of such as are, these are not they who now complain of that act. That those who have voluntarily united themselves to this church since, knowing it to be thus constituted;—and some perhaps who have left other churches to join it;—or boys of yesterday, who but a few days ago solicited admission into it, thus organized;—that these should now represent the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church as a tyrannical *usurpation* over *them*, is an abuse of language so gross that we marvel how men of common intellect or conscience can allow themselves in it.

The following is a copy of a letter from Mr. Wesley to Mr. Asbury, transcribed from the original. Its contents are in all respects highly interesting. But it is introduced here to show that, though written so recently after the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and at a period when Mr. Wesley could not but have known that event, it does not contain one syllable of censure or of disapprobation. It is dated,

“*Bristol, Sept. 30, 1785.*”

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—It gives me pleasure to hear that God prospers your labours even in the barren soil of South Carolina. Near fifty years ago I preached in the church at Charleston, and in a few other places; and deep attention sat on every face. But I am afraid few received any lasting impressions.

“At the next conference it will be worth your while

to consider deeply whether any preacher should stay in one place three years together. I startle at this. It is a vehement alteration in the Methodist discipline. We have no such custom in England, Scotland, or Ireland.

"I myself may perhaps have as much variety of matter as many of our preachers. Yet I am well assured, were I to preach three years together in one place, both the people and myself would grow as dead as stones. Indeed this is quite contrary to the whole economy of Methodism; God has always wrought among us by a constant change of preachers.

"Newly awakened people should, if it were possible, be plentifully supplied with books. Hereby the awakening is both continued and increased.

"In two or three days I expect to be in London. I will then talk with Mr. Atlay on the head. Be all in earnest for God.

"I am your affectionate friend and brother,
"J. WESLEY."

SECTION XV.—*Leaving Mr. Wesley's name off the Minutes.*

THE meaning of this phrase seems not to have been correctly understood. In some cases Mr. M'Caine asserts that Mr. Wesley's name was left off in 1785; and then expresses surprise that he, notwithstanding, by his letter of September, 1786, attempted "to exercise his authority as formerly, by desiring that Mr. Whatcoat should be appointed a superintendent." In other places he represents this event as having taken place in 1787. The confusion was in Mr. M'Caine's own mind, not in the subject. This is easily explained.

In the Minutes of the conference of 1784, in answer to the second question it was said, "During the life of the Rev. Mr. Wesley, we acknowledge ourselves his sons in the gospel, ready in matters belonging to church government to obey his commands." This minute remained unaltered till the conference of 1787. At that conference it was resolved to omit it. This act, and this only, is what is properly meant by leaving Mr. Wesley's name off the Minutes.

With regard to that minute, the conference of 1787 did not consider it in the light of a *contract* with Mr. Wesley. It had no such character. It was a mere voluntary declaration on the part of the conference of 1784, and one which had neither been required of them, nor was unalterably binding on their successors; who were as free to judge and act for themselves as their predecessors had been. If there was any thing improper in that business, Mr. Lee contends, it was in originally adopting the minute, and not in rescinding it. History, p. 127.

The declaration of the conference of 1784 was, that "during the life of Mr. Wesley they were ready to obey his commands *in matters belonging to church government*. That it was not understood or intended, however, from the commencement of our organization as a church, that Mr. Wesley should thereafter *personally appoint our church officers*, is susceptible of clear proof. In the form for "the ordination of superintendents," prepared for us by Mr. Wesley himself, and "recommended" to us in the prayer book of 1784, are these words: "After the gospel and the sermon are ended, the *elected* person shall be presented by two elders unto the superintendent, saying," &c. Again, in the same form: "Then the superintendent and elders present shall lay their hands upon the head of the *elected* person kneeling before them," &c. These passages indisputably prove, that Mr. Wesley himself at that time contemplated the

future *election* of our superintendents, and not that they were to be appointed by him.

On this principle Mr. Asbury acted from the commencement. When the design of organizing the Methodists in America into an independent episcopal church was first opened to the preachers then present, by Dr. Coke and Mr. Whatcoat, at their first meeting at Barratt's chapel, in Delaware, on the 15th of November, 1784, Mr. Asbury frankly declared, "If the preachers unanimously choose me, I shall not act in the capacity I have hitherto done by Mr. Wesley's appointment." Journal, vol. i, p. 376. This frank avowal, at that early period, is a full refutation of Mr. M'Caine's unworthy insinuation that Mr. Asbury hypocritically pretended subjection to Mr. Wesley's authority "at that juncture," lest by doing otherwise he should dash from his lips the cup of sweets. As soon as the plan was opened to him, and not long before his election or ordination, he explicitly stated that if placed in the office of superintendent it must be by the voice of his brethren. When the conference was convened he made the same declaration, and declined to serve on any other ground. Nor was he ordained, nor was Dr. Coke received as a superintendent, until they were severally elected by the conference. This proves that the conference concurred in the same view. It is demonstrable that the conference of 1784 could not have viewed this subject in any other light; for in the same Minutes, in answer to the twenty-sixth question, they expressly said, "N. B. No person shall be ordained a superintendent, elder, or deacon, *without the consent of a majority of the conference.*" In the case of Mr. Whatcoat, Mr. Lee says, "Most of the preachers objected, and would not consent." History, p. 126. This they certainly had a right to do, agreeably to the original Minutes.

It will be observed farther, that the design of organizing the Methodists in America into "an independent

episcopal church," was first opened by Dr. Coke to Mr. Asbury and the preachers present, in the presence of Richard Whatcoat. Now there is every reason to believe that Mr. Whatcoat had a correct acquaintance with the intentions of Mr. Wesley : and when Dr. Coke stated the design of forming the Methodists in America into an "independent episcopal church," if Mr. Whatcoat knew that this was contrary to Mr. Wesley's intentions, it was his duty to express it. The universally admitted character of Mr. Whatcoat is a sufficient guarantee that he would have done so. A man of greater simplicity, guilelessness, and honesty, probably never lived. Mr. M'Caine must therefore involve Mr. Whatcoat also in the guilt of this knavish conspiracy, or else set him down as an ignorant tool. Yet Mr. Wesley, who knew him well, thought him not unworthy, two years after, to be recommended for the office of general superintendent. Such are the consequences continually involved in Mr. M'Caine's hypotheses.

In a letter dated "London, September 6, 1786," addressed to Dr. Coke, Mr. Wesley says,

"DEAR SIR,—I desire that you would appoint a General Conference of all our preachers in the United States, to meet at Baltimore on May the first, 1787. And that Mr. Richard Whatcoat may be appointed superintendent with Mr. Francis Asbury."

The calling of this conference by Dr. Coke, by the direction of Mr. Wesley, at a time and place unauthorized by any previous conference, was the first ground of dissatisfaction in the conference of 1787. The time fixed for it being much earlier than had been anticipated, subjected many of the preachers to considerable inconvenience ; and some, in consequence of the derangement of their plans, did not attend at all. Among these were Ezekiel Cooper, and John M'Claskey, who then travelled in Jersey. This proceeding was one of the chief causes which led to the signing of the instru-

ment given by Dr. Coke at that conference, in which he promised not to exercise any government in the Methodist Episcopal Church *when absent* from the United States.

The subsequent part of Mr. Wesley's note does not seem to us at present, however it may have been intended, as an absolute appointment of Mr. Whatcoat. In one place, p. 43, Mr. M'Caine himself says, "It will be seen then that he does not 'appoint' Mr. Whatcoat a superintendent, but simply expresses a 'desire' that he 'may be appointed' one." Yet only one page before he expressly says, "Mr. Wesley accordingly *appointed* Mr. Whatcoat." So that, according to Mr. M'Caine, we have both assertions,—he *did* appoint him, and he *did not*. It is certain, however, that Dr. Coke contended that this letter of Mr. Wesley's was an appointment of Mr. Whatcoat; and that the conference were therefore "obliged" to receive him, in consequence of the minute of 1784 to obey Mr. Wesley's commands in matters relating to church government. And had the conference considered themselves obliged, as Dr. Coke contended, to receive Mr. Whatcoat merely by virtue of Mr. Wesley's authority, they might have been equally required by the same authority to submit to the recall of Mr. Asbury. Considering it therefore as their right, agreeably to the form of ordination, and to the rule adopted by the conference of 1784, to elect their superintendents; and finding that the minute respecting obeying Mr. Wesley in matters belonging to church government, was likely to become a source of contention, and to be construed in a sense which the conference of 1784 never intended, so as to deprive them of that right, they resolved to rescind it; and accordingly did so. But this act did not in any degree proceed from want of personal respect or regard for Mr. Wesley. At the very same time they addressed an affectionate letter to him, expressing their attachment, and their desire, if it were practicable, that he could visit them, and become per-

sonally acquainted with their affairs. For they did not believe it possible for him, at the distance of three thousand miles, to judge as correctly respecting their superintendents as they could who were on the spot. They did believe also that unjust representations of Mr. Asbury had been made to him, by some person or persons unfriendly to Mr. Asbury ; and that, if they accepted of Mr. Whatcoat merely by his authority, in these circumstances, it might probably lead to Mr. Asbury's recall. They therefore declined to receive Mr. Whatcoat. But it was the *conference* that declined, as Mr. Lee states, and not Mr. Asbury, as we shall now farther prove.*

As Mr. M'Caine, on this subject, has only revived and new dressed the old charges of Mr. O'Kelly,—to refute them we have only to adopt the former refutation of Mr. O'Kelly by Mr. Snethen.

Mr. O'Kelly had asserted, "Francis was opposed to a joint superintendent."—"For a refutation of this charge," says Mr. Snethen, "see the following testimony."—The certificates of Dr. Coke, of Philip Bruce, and of Mr. Whatcoat himself.

"When Thomas Coke and Mr. Asbury met in Charleston, Thomas Coke informed him that Mr. Wesley had

* One of Mr. M'Caine's unnamed authorities says, "About this time there was a great rumour in London concerning the strides taken by Mr. Asbury for the extent of power, and one elderly gentleman, the Rev. T. R.," [Thomas Rankin, we presume,] "said it would be right to recall a man of that ambitious turn. *Mrs. Asbury*" [the mother of Bishop Asbury] "heard of this saying, and intimated to her son she hoped to see him shortly in England."

Mr. Snethen says also, "Mr. Asbury was the only English preacher that adopted the American country, and was determined to stand or fall with the cause of independence ; all the rest returned, and *one at least* was not very well affected toward him : and Mr. Asbury's intentions were questioned, and Mr. Wesley was advised to keep a watchful eye over the great water." Answer to J. O'Kelly's Vindication, page 18.

It appears, too, from Mr. Snethen's account, that a preacher who was expelled in 1792 had been misrepresenting Mr. Asbury, and imposing on Mr. Wesley. Through *his* aid Mr. Hammett endeavoured to stab the character of Mr. Asbury. Mr. O'Kelly used the materials which they had prepared to his hand ; and Mr. M'Caine has availed himself of them all, with the addition of Mr. Kewley's productions, but without naming his authorities.

appointed Richard Whatcoat as a joint superintendent, and Mr. Asbury *acquiesced* in the appointment, as did the Charleston conference when it was laid before them. Thomas Coke proposed the appointment to the Virginia conference, and, to his great pain and disappointment, James O'Kelly most strenuously opposed it; but consented that the Baltimore conference might decide it, upon condition that the Virginia conference might send a deputy to explain their sentiments.

“Jan. 7, 1796. (Signed) THOMAS COKE.”

“I perfectly remember that Mr. O'Kelly opposed the appointment of Mr. Whatcoat; and that Mr. Asbury said enough to him and me to convince us that he was not opposed to the appointment.

“Norfolk, Nov. 30, 1796. (Signed) PHILIP BRUCE.”

“Mr. Asbury *was not opposed* to my being joint superintendent with himself. After receiving Mr. Wesley's letter he wrote to me from Charleston upon the subject. As I have not the letter by me at present, I cannot give the contents verbatim: but, as well as I recollect, the conclusion was: ‘And if so, you must meet me at the Warm Springs, and we will make out a plan for your route through the continent.

“(Signed) R. WHATCOAT.”*

“How could he” (Mr. O'Kelly) says Mr. Snethen, “publish such an idea? Had he forgotten the conversation which passed between himself and Mr. Asbury, at Dick's Ferry, upon Dan River? in which Mr. Asbury told him it would be best to accept Richard Whatcoat.”

* Let the reader compare these certificates with the letter of the 31st of Oct., 1789, which Mr. M'Caine, p. 47, imputes to Mr. Wesley, in which it is stated that Mr. Asbury “flatly refused to receive Mr. Whatcoat.” From this comparison it is certain, either that Mr. Wesley never wrote that letter as it is given to us; or if he did, that he had been imposed on by *false information*.

Rev. N. Snethen's Reply to James O'Kelly's Apology, pp. 9, 10.

We may add, also, that Mr. Snethen has as triumphantly vindicated Mr. Asbury from "the smallest blame" in relation to the leaving of Mr. Wesley's name off the Minutes. Mr. O'Kelly had asserted that "Francis took with him a few chosen men, and in a clandestine manner expelled John, whose surname was Wesley, from the Methodist Episcopal Church." Mr. Snethen replies,

"Surely an author that will publish such a slander against an innocent man, is but little better than he who would be guilty of the charge. Mr. Asbury has given the compiler a particular detail of every circumstance relative to himself, that had the most remote relation to the leaving Mr. Wesley's name out of the American Minutes; which makes it appear that *Mr. Asbury was not deserving of the smallest blame in the whole business*; and the compiler," Mr. Snethen, "*is certain that Dr. Coke and all the preachers then living, who were at that time members of the conference, were perfectly satisfied that Mr. Asbury was entirely innocent of the charge.*" Reply to Mr. O'Kelly's Apology, p. 12.*

On the whole, viewing this subject with a candid and affectionate reverence for all parties, we do not say that a gentler and more conciliatory course on the part of that conference, in relation to Mr. Wesley personally, might not have been, perhaps, the more excellent way. But this is submitted with all our added light, and when

* Since writing the above we have seen a statement from Mr. Snethen of the circumstances in which his publications respecting Mr. O'Kelly were compiled.—It does not appear, however, to require any alteration of what we have written. The facts and documents remain the same. We are well satisfied also that Mr. Snethen would never, even as a member of a committee, have published any thing which he did not himself believe. And we are equally satisfied that he always had, and still has, too high an opinion of Bishop Asbury's personal moral worth, to believe for a moment that he would have furnished either documents, or any statement of facts, even in his own defence, which he knew to be either forged or false.

the excitements, the apprehensions, and the embarrassments of that day are wholly gone. Yet we do say, that had we lived in the days of "our fathers," it is highly probable that a majority of us would have felt, and judged, and acted, as a majority of them did; and very doubtful whether we, or their censors, would have done better.

At one time, Mr. Wesley's name, to use the common phrase, was left off the *American Minutes*. At another, *Dr. Coke's* was omitted in the *English Minutes*. And at yet another, (1778,) Mr. Asbury's name also was omitted in the *American Minutes*. In each case it was done from what were then deemed prudential considerations. With our *present lights* we may doubt, perhaps, the real necessity of either of them. Yet are *we* prepared to assert, with confidence, what might, and would have been the effects, if these measures had not been adopted?*

Mr. M'Caine is also displeased that, at the death of Mr. Wesley, no account was given of him in the *American Minutes*. We wish this had been otherwise. But if he can believe that the omission resulted from "*con-*

* With respect to the "rejecting of Mr. Wesley," or leaving his name off the Minutes, the following is Mr. Asbury's statement:—

"I was amazed to hear that my dear aged friend, Benjamin Evans, (now gone to glory,) was converted to the new side by being told by J. O'Kelly that I had offended Mr. Wesley, and that he being about calling me to account, I cast him off altogether. But, *quere*, did not J. O'K. set aside the appointment of Richard Whatcoat? and did not the conference in Baltimore strike that *minute* out of our Discipline which was called a *rejecting of Mr. Wesley*? and now does J. O'K. lay all the blame on me. It is true, I never approved of that binding minute. I did not think it practical expediency to obey Mr. Wesley, at three thousand miles' distance, in all matters relative to church government; neither did Brother Whatcoat, nor several others. At the first General Conference I was mute and modest when it passed, and I was mute when it was expunged. For this Mr. Wesley blamed me, and was displeased that I did not rather reject the whole connection, or leave them, if they did not comply. But I could not give up the connection so easily, after labouring and suffering so many years with and for them." *Journal*, vol. ii, p. 270.

tempt" of Mr. Wesley, we must leave him to enjoy his opinion. The adoption of such a sentiment requires a strong predisposition and desire to believe it.*

The truth seems to be, that, as the deaths of American preachers are not mentioned in the British Minutes, so the deaths of the European preachers are not mentioned in the American Minutes; although, in a general sense, we are all regarded as one body. In the case of Mr. Wesley an exception to this general mode of proceeding might doubtless have been made with great propriety. But that not a particle of any thing like "cold neglect" or "contempt" of Mr. Wesley had place in the mind of Mr. Asbury on that occasion, we have the explicit testimony of Mr. Moore. Even on receiving from Mr. Wesley the letter of Sept., 1788, Mr. Moore says, "Mr. Asbury *lost none of his veneration* for his father in the gospel," Mr. Wesley: and as a *proof* of this he cites the entry which Mr. Asbury made in his journal, on the occasion of the death "of that dear man of God;" in which, after expressing himself in the highest terms of Mr. Wesley's character and attainments, Mr. Asbury adds: "I conclude his *equal* is not to be found among all the sons he hath brought up, nor his *superior* among *all the sons of Adam*." Life of Wesley, vol. ii, p. 286. With what face, after this, can Mr. Asbury, at least, be involved in the insinuation of treating the memory of Mr. Wesley with "cold neglect, if not contempt?"

Even in the British Minutes the notice of Mr. Wesley's death was extremely short: for the conference declared that they found themselves "utterly inadequate to express their ideas and feelings on that awful and affecting event."

* When the great Fletcher died, the account of him in the English Minutes was contained in *one line and a quarter*. That *line and a quarter*, however, from the pen of Mr. Wesley, expressed, we confess, as much as some of our modern pages.

That Mr. Wesley before his death became satisfied of the continued affection and attachment of the American Methodists, appears from his correspondence.

In a letter to the Rev. Ezekiel Cooper, written only twenty-nine days before his death, after mentioning his growing infirmities, he says, "Probably I should not be able to do so much, did not many of you assist me by your prayers. See that you never give place to one thought of separating from your brethren in Europe. Lose no opportunity of declaring to all men that the Methodists are one people in all the world, and that it is their full determination so to continue,

‘Though mountains rise, and oceans roll,
To sever us in vain,’ ”

This proves that he did not then consider us as separated from himself, or from our European brethren.

The same sentiment has been since officially avowed both by the British and American conferences. The credentials furnished by our brethren in Europe, either to their ministers or members, are recognised and honoured by us here, as entitling them to every privilege of our church. The credentials which we furnish are also acknowledged by them. And of late years the two connections have mutually exchanged delegates, as the representatives of each other, in our respective conferences. Of this state of unity and affection every friend of this great work will cordially say—May it be perpetual.*

* On the proceedings of the conference of 1787, Dr. Coke in his Journal of that date remarks,—

“Never surely was more external peace and liberty enjoyed by the church of God, or any part of it, since the fall of man, than we enjoy in America : and every thing seems to be falling before the power of the word. What then remained for the infernal serpent, but to sow the seeds of schism and division among ourselves? But, glory be to God, yea, glory for ever be ascribed to his sacred name, the devil was completely defeated. Our painful contests, I trust, have produced the most indissoluble union between my brethren and me. We thoroughly perceived the mutual purity of each other’s intentions in respect to the points in dispute. We mutually yielded,

SECTION XVI.—*Mr. M'Caine's Arithmetical Calculations.*

MR. M'CAINE states, page 65, that the "appeal" proposed by Mr. O'Kelly in the conference of 1792 "was the origin and cause of a secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church, of such great extent, that in less than five years the Minutes of Conference exhibit a decrease of 20,000 members."

Now how does he make this out? The conference at which Mr. O'Kelly proposed his appeal was in *November, 1792*. The first return of numbers thereafter was in 1793. The total number of members, white and coloured, on the face of the Minutes then was 67,643. In 1798, five years afterward, the total number was 60,169; making a decrease of only 7,474. Or, if we take it in 1797, four years from 1793, the total number then was 58,663; making a decrease of 8,980. If we make the calculations from 1792, the decrease, according to the Minutes, in 1796 was 9,316; and in 1797 it was 7,317.

But did not Mr. M'Caine, in order to show so large a decrease, go back to 1791? If he did, why did he do so? In 1792 the aggregate numbers on the face of the Minutes was 65,980; and it was *subsequently* to that return that the General Conference of 1792, at which Mr. O'Kelly proposed his appeal, was held. Of course, the numbers as returned for 1791 could not justly be made the starting place for this calculation. Besides, from 1791 to 1792 there was in reality an *increase* of more than 2,000 members; which farther shows the

and mutually submitted; and the silken cords of love and affection were tied to the horns of the altar for ever and ever."

We shall be most truly rejoiced to find that as much purity of intention, and sincerity of affection, and of "the wisdom that is from above," exists among us at the present day, as actuated the hearts of our excellent "fathers."

impropriety of beginning the calculation of a *decrease* from 1791. It happens, however, that in 1791 the face of the Minutes exhibits so very large an aggregate that it suited Mr. M'Caine's purpose excellently well to begin his calculation from that date. But in that aggregate, as exhibited by the Minutes, did Mr. M'Caine discover no mistake? If he did not, his examination was extremely superficial. If he did, it was a great want of candour, and great injustice to his readers, not to state it. On either ground we submit whether this specimen affords us any very great encouragement to rely implicitly on Mr. M'Caine's diligent investigation, and accurate report of *documents*? Whoever will examine the Minutes of 1791 will find that there is an error in the aggregate of the numbers stated for that year of between *twelve and thirteen thousand too many*. The *whole* number, of both whites and coloured, is first given at the foot of the column headed "Whites;" and then the number of the *coloured* is given *besides*, which makes an error equal to the whole number of the coloured members, which must be deducted from the total aggregate of the two columns, to ascertain the true aggregate.

In this calculation Mr. M'Caine is the more inexcusable, as he had before him Mr. Lee's History, in which the increase and decrease are regularly stated from year to year. This might have led any careful investigator to an easy discovery of the error in the Minutes. In 1794 the first decrease took place that had occurred for fourteen years. The largest decrease was in 1795. In 1796 there was still a decrease. But in 1797 there was again an increase, nearly 2,000 having been added to the numbers.

In the simple addition and subtraction of figures, we should have supposed that Mr. M'Caine would have been peculiarly accurate. And if he has so palpably erred in a case so plain, and so perfectly susceptible of investigation and correction, it can be no want of charity

to believe that he may have equally erred in matters much more difficult and intricate, in which he has bewildered himself in the mazes of "mystery," where the certain science of mathematics could afford no aid.

But we have a few other cases of arithmetical logic to propose in bar of Mr. M'Caine's. If the "decrease" stated by Mr. M'Caine, and the "secessions since that period in different parts of the United States," be a fair argument against our "episcopal form of church government," are the *increase* and the *accessions* since no argument in its favour? We put then the following cases for Mr. M'Caine's calculation.

In the year 1784, when the Methodist Episcopal Church was first organized, the number of members in our societies was 14,988. In forty-three years, under our episcopal form of church government, the increase has been 367,009; the total number of members now being 381,997.

In less than five years, at one period, Mr. M'Caine says there was a *decrease* of 20,000 members; though the true decrease, during that period, was not half that number. In *one* year (1827) we have had an *increase* of 21,197.

The secession which caused the decrease which Mr. M'Caine names, soon came to naught: and scarcely a wreck or a vestige of it now remains; while Episcopal Methodism, from which that secession drew off, has been graciously and divinely prospered, to an extent even beyond the anticipations of its most sanguine and devoted friends. Now the answer required is, taking all these cases together, what is the sum of the arithmetical argument;—on which side is the true balance; and to what amount?

SECTION XVII.—*The Address to General Washington.*

OF all Mr. M'Caine's book, those parts which respect the address to General Washington are the most extraordinary. "It is evident," he asserts, p. 46, "that the *date* of this address was altered." That he does not in direct terms charge Mr. Asbury with the alteration, and for the base purposes named, as we have before shown, cannot excuse him. The implication is too clear to be mistaken. If a false date were forged, and imposed on the public, Mr. Asbury could not have been innocent. He could not have been ignorant of the truth in the case, nor of his duty respecting it. We have therefore examined this subject minutely; and the result has amply repaid our pains.*

Mr. Drew does not give the address itself; nor state expressly what its precise date was. He seems, indeed, to have been left in peculiar embarrassment with regard to dates, in consequence of the death of Dr. Coke at sea, before he had arranged his papers in chronological order, for his anticipated biographer, as he had intended. This is intimated in Mr. Drew's dedication. Admitting, however, from the course of his narrative, that it was

* Mr. M'Caine asserts also, pp. 37 and 38, that the *Minutes of Conference* "*were altered*,"—"to make them quadrate with subsequent proceedings." In proof of this, and showing the *application* to Mr. Asbury, he refers to Lee's History. Now Mr. Lee says, "In the course of this year" [1787] "Mr. Asbury reprinted the General Minutes, but *in a different form* from what they were before," p. 127. The Minutes had been printed before in one general body of consecutive questions and answers. Mr. Asbury "methodized and arranged them under proper heads." So also Mr. Lee says in another place, p. 68, "The form of the Annual Minutes was changed this year" [1779] "in a few points; and the first question stands thus, 'Who are admitted on trial?' The first question used to be, 'Who are admitted into connection?'" It is evident, therefore, that Mr. Lee had reference simply to the *form* in which the Minutes were methodized and printed. And has not their form been repeatedly altered since? Has it not been altered, and, as some think, improved, several times within the last few years? If this be deemed any crime, those considered guilty would be much obliged if the accusation may be made in their lifetime, that they may have an opportunity to answer for themselves.

his impression that the address was presented in 1785, this mistake can be much more readily excused in Mr. Drew than in Mr. M'Caine. Mr. Drew was a foreigner, writing in a foreign country. Mr. M'Caine was here on the spot, writing in reference to prominent and well-known events in our history, and where the most ample and accurate sources of information were perfectly open to him. The two dates, 1785 and 1789, were *both* before him. Both were subjected to his deliberate investigation. He *chose* that of 1785; and went so far as to charge that of 1789 with being an "altered" date, and consequently forged. Nothing could be more deliberate, and at the same time more grossly erroneous. Any former publisher might have overlooked an error in the narrative, as a court in the ordinary routine of business, without investigation or argument, or having the attention directed to the points of a case. But Mr. M'Caine's error is that of a court solemnly deliberating, hearing the arguments of counsel, taking time to advise, and then pronouncing a most glaringly unfounded and injurious decision, against all evidence and reason, and all justice and truth.

Mr. M'Caine repeatedly states that the address was made to General Washington, "President of the American congress." He does this not only when quoting Mr. Drew, but when he has no reference to Mr. Drew. See particularly page 62. Now did he not know, or ought he not to have known, that General Washington never was president of the American congress? and that in 1785 he was in no official situation whatever, but a mere private citizen attending to his farms. In fact Washington was a private citizen during the whole period from the resignation of his command of the American armies in 1783, till his election to the presidency in 1789; except only during the few months in which he was a member and president of the convention for the formation of the constitution of the United States,

in 1787. These facts and dates are contained in our common *school books*.

Mr. M'Caine, however, did know that Washington was not president of the United States till after the adoption of the constitution in 1788. This he states, p. 46. Why then, in the name of consistency, did he still insist that the true date of the address was in 1785? Do not both the address and the answer contain perfect *internal* evidence that their proper date *must* have been after the adoption of the constitution, and the election of General Washington to the presidency? Unless we admit this, we must allege a forgery not only in the *date*, but in the *body* and *matter* both of the address and answer. The address commences thus:—

“To the *President of the United States*.” It then proceeds to express the congratulations of the bishops on the general’s “appointment to the *presidentship of these States*.” And in the ensuing paragraph, their most grateful satisfaction at his course respecting “the most excellent constitution of these States.”

The president in his reply returns his thanks for their demonstrations of affection, and expressions of joy “on his late appointment.” Now can any one tell what “late appointment” General Washington had received in 1785? or how any sense can be made out of this whole business, if its date be fixed at any time anterior to 1789?

But we will not detain the reader longer with reasoning on the subject, though our reasoning alone would be conclusive. We will present him with the evidence of documents which shall put this matter to rest. The following is an

. Extract of a Letter from the Rev. Thomas Morrell, to the Rev. Ezekiel Cooper, dated, “Elizabethtown, N. J., Aug. 26, 1827.”

“With regard to the information you request concerning the address to General Washington, I can furnish

you with every material circumstance respecting it, having acted as a sub-agent in the transaction, and having a distinct recollection of the whole business. The history of it is, That Mr. Asbury, in the New-York conference in 1789, offered for the consideration of the conference the following proposal:—Whether it would not be proper for us, as a church, to present a congratulatory address to General Washington, who had been lately inaugurated president of the United States, in which should be embodied our approbation of the constitution, and professing our allegiance to the government. The conference unanimously approved, and warmly recommended the measure; and appointed the two bishops, Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, to draw up the address. It was finished that day, and read to the conference, who evinced great satisfaction in its recital. Brother Dickens and myself were delegated to wait on the president with a copy of the address, and request him to appoint a day and hour when he would receive the bishops, one of whom was to read it to him, and receive his answer. It was concluded that although Dr. Coke was the senior bishop, yet not being an American citizen, there would be an impropriety in his presenting and reading the address; the duty devolved of course on Bishop Asbury. Mr. Dickens and myself waited on the general; and as I had some personal acquaintance with him, I was desired to present him with the copy, and request his reception of the original by the hands of the bishops. The president appointed the fourth succeeding day, at twelve o'clock, to receive the bishops. They went at the appointed hour, accompanied by Brother Dickens and Thomas Morrell. Mr. Asbury, with great self-possession, read the address in an impressive manner. The president read his reply with fluency and animation. They interchanged their respective addresses; and, after sitting a few minutes, we departed. The address and the

answer, in a few days were inserted in the public prints ; and some of the ministers and members of the other churches appeared dissatisfied that the *Methodists* should take the lead. In a few days the other denominations successively followed our example.

“ The next week a number of questions were published, in the public papers, concerning Dr. Coke’s signing the address. Who was he ? How came he to be a bishop ? Who consecrated him, &c., accompanied with severe strictures on the impropriety of a *British subject* signing an address approving of the government of the United States ; charging him with duplicity, and that he was an enemy to the independence of America ; for they affirmed he had written, during our revolutionary war, an inflammatory address to the people of Great Britain, condemning, in bitter language, our efforts to obtain our independence ; and other charges tending to depreciate the doctor’s character, and bringing him into contempt with the people of our country. As I did not believe the assertion of the doctor’s writing the address above-mentioned, I applied to a gentleman who was in England at the time, to know the truth of the charge ; he assured me the doctor had published no such sentiments in England during the revolutionary war, or at any other period, or he should have certainly had some knowledge of it. And this was the fact, for the doctor had written no such thing. As there was no other person in New-York, at that time, in our connection, who could meet these charges, and satisfactorily answer these queries, I undertook the task, and in my weak manner endeavoured to rebut the charges and answer the questions. A second piece appeared, and a second answer was promptly published. No more was written on the subject in New-York. The doctor afterward gave me his thanks for defending his character.

“ Such are the material circumstances that occurred concerning the address to General Washington, and his

reply : which you are at liberty to make use of in any way you think proper,—and if you judge it necessary may put my name to it.

“THOMAS MORRELL.”

I certify that the above is a true extract of an original letter of the Rev. Thomas Morrell, addressed to me, bearing the above date, and now in my possession.

EZEKIEL COOPER.

New-York, September 7, 1827.

To this we add the following copy of a letter from the Rev. Mr. Sparks, of Boston, to whom the papers of General Washington have been intrusted, for the purpose of making such selections for publication as he shall deem proper ; in which important work this gentleman is now engaged. And for this polite and prompt reply to our inquiries, we here tender to Mr. Sparks our most respectful thanks.

“*Boston, September 1, 1827.*

“DEAR SIR,—Your favour of the 26th ultimo has been received, and I am happy to be able to furnish you with the information you desire. The ‘*date*’ of the address presented by Bishops Coke and Asbury to General Washington is May *twenty-ninth*, 1789. It is proper to inform you, however, that I do not find the *original* paper on the files, but take the date as it is recorded in one of the volumes of ‘Addresses.’ It is barely possible that there may be a mistake in the record, but not at all probable.

“It is not likely that any address from any quarter was presented to Washington in 1785. I have never seen any of that year. He was then a private man, wholly employed with his farms.

“I am, sir, very respectfully,

“Your obedient servant,

Mr. J. Emory.

“JARED SPARKS.”

To complete this investigation, we have examined the newspapers published in this city (New-York) in 1789, of which files are preserved in the New-York Library. The address of Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury was published in the *Gazette of the United States*, on the 3d of June, 1789; and is dated May 29, of that year; exactly corresponding with the date stated by Mr. Sparks, from the Washington records. The same address may be found in the *Arminian Magazine* for June, 1789, published in Philadelphia by John Dickens. It is there dated May 19, 1789. This seems either to have been a typographical error of 19 for 29; or, probably, the original draught of an address was prepared about the 19th,—and this date, *then* put to it, was inadvertently left uncorrected when placed in the hands of the printer. This difference of a few days, however, cannot now be of any possible moment, as it is placed beyond all dispute, that the true date of the address, as presented to Washington, was May 29, 1789.*

The visit of Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury to General Washington, at Mount Vernon, in 1785, was merely to solicit his influence in favour of a petition which they had it in contemplation to present to the general assembly of Virginia on the subject of slavery. They dined with the general, and had a personal interview on the subject, but made no particular address. A circumstantial account of that visit, and the politeness with which the general received them, may be seen in Dr. Coke's journal of May, 1785.†

* At the British conference in 1820 an address was adopted on the occasion of the death of George III., and the accession of George IV. to the throne of Great Britain. The original draught of that address was prepared by Dr. Adam Clarke *previously* to the conference. It was read by him and submitted to the conference on the *first* day of the session, and *dated* on that day, though not finally acted on till some days after, nor presented till still later.

† In the account which Mr. Drew gives of Dr. Coke's and Mr. Asbury's address to General Washington, he states that "various addresses" of other denominations about the same time found their way into the American news-

Since writing the above, we have received a letter from the Rev. Ezekiel Cooper; of which the following is an extract:—

“Trenton, N. J., Oct. 16, 1827.

“Rev. John Emory,

“DEAR SIR,—I have a book, now lying before me, entitled, ‘*A Collection of the Speeches of the President of the United States to both Houses of Congress at the opening of every Session, with their Answers.—Also, the Addresses to the President, with his Answers, from the time of his Election.*’ Printed at Boston, by Manning & Loring, for Solomon Cotton, 1796.’ In which book, at pages 133, 134, is the address of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church to the president, and his answer. The address is dated New-York, May 29, 1789. This agrees with the information you have from Mr. Jared Sparks, as to the time when the address was presented.

“It is now to be hoped that neither the author of the History and Mystery of Methodist Episcopacy, nor his friends or advocates, will be so bold, I am almost ready to say so presumptuous, as to believe the reproachful or slanderous charge of altering the date of the said address, to answer some unworthy and falsely supposed purpose. For in so doing, it will implicate Washington himself, who has left it on record among his papers,

papers, and across the Atlantic; among which, none so much attracted the attention of the English Methodists as that which bore the signature of Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury.—Life of Dr. Coke, pp. 147, 148. Of these other addresses, that of the Presbyterian Church was dated May 26, 1789, and presented June 5;—of the German Reformed, June 10, 1789;—of the Protestant Episcopal Church, dated August 7, and presented August 19, 1789. These were all published in the Gazette of the United States of that year. That of the Protestant Episcopal Church was also published in the New-York Daily Gazette. The president’s answer to each of them bears no date; except that to the Protestant Episcopal Church, as published in the Gazette of the United States, is dated August 19. But as published in the New-York Daily Gazette this also is not dated. And we believe the president did not usually date his answers to addresses at that period.

that the said address was received by him May 29, 1789. Also Mr. Sparks, who is in possession of Washington's papers, and testifies, in the communication to you that it there stands dated May 29, 1789. And also the compiler or editor of the book before me, above-mentioned, in which the address and answer are published, bearing the same date, May 29, 1789. Surely every one must be fully convinced and satisfied of the false and unworthy charge.

"The answers of Washington to the addresses are generally without date: scarcely an instance of date. Some of the addresses and answers are both without date.

"As to the difference of the date of Bishops Coke and Asbury's address, as published in the *Arminian Magazine*, May 19, and as published in the above-mentioned book, &c., May 29, it might have been a typographical error, otherwise the original draught might have been written in Philadelphia, where the conference sat the 18th of May—and the conference sat in New-York the 28th. At New-York they probably dated it the 29th, and Brother Dickens might have printed from the draught made in Philadelphia, dated the 19th. The *Magazine* was published in Philadelphia.

"Yours, &c.,

"EZEKIEL COOPER."*

* We take pleasure in adding, that having had frequent interviews with Mr. Cooper, and free conversations on the subjects of this work, we believe we are warranted in saying that he concurs in our views. To this intelligent and able man, one of the most aged of our itinerant ministry now living, we here also tender our thanks for several interesting facts derived from the treasures of his well-stored memory; and also from some private manuscript notes of his own. The concurrence of Mr. Cooper on the topics here discussed is the more valued, as all who are acquainted with him know that, as no man among us is more capable of forming a correct judgment respecting them, or has paid more minute and constant attention to them, so no one is less disposed unduly to exalt the episcopacy, or would be more free and fearless to expose any imposition or fraud, if discovered.

SECTION XVIII.—“*History and Mystery*” of
Mr. M'Caine's *Inconsistency*.

AFTER all Mr. M'Caine's denunciations of the name of bishop, and of the episcopal office among us, he thus concludes, pp. 70-72.

“Let the local ministers and the laity be represented in the legislative department of the church. On the other points which we have mentioned above, we place, comparatively, no stress. We are not tenacious of them. We are willing, if it should be thought best, to relinquish any, or all of them. But representation from the local ministry and laity, by the help of God, we will never relinquish.” Now one of “the *other points*” mentioned above was,—“Let the name of bishop, and the episcopal office as it now exists among us, be put away for ever.” Yet, founded in falsehood, in imposture, and in fraud, as he represents these to have been, and disgraceful and contemptible almost beyond expression, he is nevertheless “not tenacious” of their being “put away,” provided the laity and the local ministry, of whom he is one, may be admitted into a higher state of participation with this base concern! Is Mr. M'Caine sincere? Does he really mean, after all he has said, that if admitted into the General Conference, he would not be “tenacious” of “doing away the name of bishop and the episcopal office, as it now exists among us”—or does he say this, lest by saying otherwise “at this juncture” he might “dash from” *his* “lips the cup of sweets?”*

* This part of Mr. M'Caine's work has been noticed by another writer, in the following terms of strong rebuke :—“We must say, that if he believes all that he has written in the previous part of his book, and would be satisfied with *this*, he offers a base and disgraceful compromise. If we believed, as he asserts, that the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church originated in falsehood, and has been perpetuated by fraud and forgery, we would disdain to make any compromise at all with the authors of it: we would be satisfied with nothing which did not go to overthrow the whole establishment, and wipe from the remembrance of all men, this foul blot on the character of Methodism.”—Dr. T. E. Bond's Appeal.

But a still more extraordinary "mystery" of inconsistency remains to be developed. Mr. M'Caine states in his preface, page 5, as one of the reasons for his publication, that he thinks the "exposure" he has made "will tend much to lessen, if it will not totally overcome, the opposition of travelling preachers to representation." That is, to the representation of the local preachers and laity in the General Conference.

Now the reader will please to observe, that for many years past, a large portion of the travelling preachers have been desirous to effect some diminution of the episcopal prerogative, by vesting in the annual conferences some voice in the selection of the presiding elders. This Mr. M'Caine knew. Yet during the very period in which he was engaged in preparing his book, in order, it would seem, to "lessen, if not totally to overcome," episcopal opposition, too, to the representation of the local preachers, he made a communication, in a way to reach episcopal ears, that if he might take the liberty of expressing *all his mind*, the probability would be greater for the *continuance* of the exercise of this prerogative from a *local* representation than without it. And why? Because, in his opinion, *affection* and *veneration* for EPISCOPAL men might, *and no doubt would*, lead a local representation to *support* a measure which they had no immediate and direct interest in opposing! Thus, by "exposure" of episcopacy and of episcopal men, Mr. M'Caine exerts himself on one side, ("candidly" too, he assures us,) to lessen, if not totally to overcome, the opposition of travelling preachers to the representation of local preachers. And, at the same time, on the other side, he endeavours to convince episcopal men that the representation of local preachers will tend to confirm and to perpetuate their prerogative: and this, too, not on the ground of reason or argument, but from the *affection* and *veneration* of the local preachers for episcopal men. So that, in the opinion of Mr.

M'Caine this was the return which those said travelling preachers would, "*no doubt*," receive from those same local brethren who had been labouring to induce them to assist the said local brethren to get into General Conference. On all this we shall leave the reader to make his own comments. The facts, we apprehend will not be denied. But if Mr. M'Caine's opinion be correct, how it is calculated to "lessen, if not totally to overcome," opposition to the representation of local preachers, on the part of those travelling preachers, at least, who have been desirous of effecting some diminution of this episcopal prerogative, is to us, we confess a "mystery."

SECTION XIX.—*Union Society of Baltimore ; Conclusion.*

MR. M'CAINE states, p. 4, that "the result of his investigation was read before the Union Society of reformers in Baltimore, and the writer was requested to print it for the information of his brethren." Of what number or persons the Union Society of Baltimore consists, we are not informed. Some of the individuals who compose it we know. And we are unwilling to believe that they could have deliberately and understandingly sanctioned and recommended such a publication. Our hope therefore is, either that the members of that society were not all present when Mr. M'Caine's manuscript was read;—or they did not hear the whole of it;—or they did not all approve of it;—or they had not a fair opportunity of weighing and examining it, and have thought differently of it since it was printed: but if disappointed in all these hopes, then we persuade ourselves that they will at least give this defence a fair and candid consideration; and if convinced that Mr. M'Caine has

led them into error, that they will frankly and honourably declare it.

Have the Union Society of Baltimore forgotten that the remains of Bishop Asbury were disinterred, and removed from Virginia, and deposited in their city, as a place peculiarly dear to him? Have they forgotten the solemn rites with which, by the joint act of the General Conference, and of the Baltimore Society, they were placed under the pulpit of the Eutaw church, as in a sacred and chosen asylum, where his ashes might rest in honoured peace, under their affectionate and generous protection? With what feelings then could such of our brethren as may have sanctioned the publication of Mr. M'Caine's book stand in that very pulpit, over those ashes, to preach to those whom they know to hold the name of that venerable man in so much filial love and reverence? Can it be supposed that their hearers could avoid the association of the *book* the *preacher*, and the injured "*father*?" And could such an association be either agreeable or profitable? Ought not the ashes of that father first to be taken up and given to the winds: or be sent to the Potter's field, where *strangers* lie in peace? Or at least be returned to their resting place in Virginia, whence they were solicited? And will not a voice from his tomb be otherwise continually reproaching the Union Society of Baltimore; or their proceeding be a standing reproach to him?*

* Since the above was prepared for the press, we have seen a publication in which it is stated that no vote of recommendation to publish Mr. M'Caine's work had passed the Union Society. This is stated on the authority of the president and secretary; and it is added, that Mr. M'Caine also "declared that he had no allusion to a vote of the Union Society." We will not charge Mr. M'Caine with a design to mislead his readers, or to give currency to his book by representing it as sanctioned by the Union Society of Baltimore. Nor will we impute to the officers of that society the littleness of descending to the quibble that no such "vote" passed the society, if the work had been in any manner sanctioned by that body. But that such of Mr. M'Caine's readers as were not in the secret have understood him to allude to the Union Society before whom the result of his investigations was read, as requesting

We have now performed in some respects a painful, in others a pleasurable task. The investigations to which it has led us have occupied our close and prayerful attention. If the result be as satisfactory to others as it has been to our own mind, the Methodist reader will continue to bless God that his name has been associated with those of Wesley, of Coke, and of Asbury; and with the names of those excellent "fathers," through whose labours, and the "institutions received from" them, with the Divine blessing, the foundations were laid of that great work of God which has been spread over these lands. And with regard to our own Asbury, particularly, he will confidently and triumphantly conclude, in the language of Mr. Snethen on the occasion of his death,—*"Whatever of scandal may hereafter attach to us, neither we nor our children shall have to bear the reproach of crimes in our human leader. Few among those who have followed in the same track, have excelled him in any of the qualities which constitute a good man;—in the union of them all NONE HAVE SURPASSED HIM."*

him to print it, there can be no doubt. Indeed we do not see how any other rational construction can be put on the sentence: "The result of his investigation was read before the Union Society of reformers in Baltimore; and the writer was requested to print it for the information of his brethren," page 4. If in this, however, we have been mistaken, and there be no "mystery" in this thing, then our remarks are to be applied, not to the society as such, but to the individuals concerned.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

RESPECTING DR. COKE'S LETTER TO BISHOP WHITE.

HAVING received an extract from Dr. Coke's letter to the Rev. Ezekiel Cooper on this subject, but too late for insertion in the body of this work, we introduce it here.

For two years or more, previously to 1792, Mr. O'Kelly had excited much disaffection in Virginia; particularly in the important and extensive district over which he then presided. It was, indeed, a matter of controversy at that period, whether he and the preachers who adhered to him were in "the union," as he expressed it; although his name was regularly continued on the Minutes as a presiding elder till 1792, when he withdrew. In 1792 our General Conferences were first established. Previously to that time we had none, except that of 1784. Dr. Coke was of opinion that some general and permanent bond of union was imperiously needed. Mr. Asbury was of the same opinion. The "council" was proposed as an expedient; but not being found to answer the purpose it was discontinued, after only two sessions, in 1789 and 1790. In that measure Dr. Coke did not concur. The proceedings of Mr. O'Kelly produced great agitation. Special pains were taken to enlist Dr. Coke in his views, and to produce disaffection between him and Bishop Asbury. Dr. Coke became alarmed for the safety of the connection; and in that state of mind, without consulting his colleague, resolved to ascertain whether a union could be effected with the Protestant Episcopal Church, on such terms as he conceived would secure the integrity and the rights of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was also under an impression, as before stated, that such a junction would greatly enlarge our field of action; and that myriads would attend our ministry in consequence of it who were at that time much prejudiced against us. All these things, "unitedly considered," led him to write to Bishop White in 1791, and to meet him and Dr. Magaw in Philadelphia. This he states in his letter to Mr. Cooper. An extract of that letter is now before us. It is dated "Near Leeds, Yorkshire, Jan. 29, 1808;" and is in the form of an address to the General Conference. The correctness of the extract is certified by Mr. Cooper, as taken by himself from the original, in Dr. Coke's hand-writing. In this letter, after adverting to the circumstances above named, and to the labour and fatigue with which, a short time before he wrote to Bishop White, he had prevailed on James O'Kelly and the preachers who adhered to him, to submit to the decision of a General Conference, Dr. Coke replies to the following question: "If he did not believe the episcopal ordination of Mr. Asbury valid, why he had ordained him?" To this, he says, "I answer:

"1. I never, since I could reason on those things, considered the doctrine of the uninterrupted apostolical succession of bishops as at all valid or true.

"2. I am of our late venerable father, Mr. Wesley's opinion, that the order of bishops and presbyters is one and the same.

"3. I believe that the episcopal form of church government is the best in the world, when the episcopal power is under due regulations and responsibility.

"4. I believe that it is well to follow the example of the primitive church, as exemplified in the word of God, by setting apart persons for great ministerial purposes by the imposition of hands: but especially those who are appointed for offices of the first rank in the church.

"From all I have advanced, you may easily perceive, my dear brethren, that I do not consider the imposition of hands on the one hand, as essentially necessary for any office in the church; nor do I, on the other hand, think that the repetition of the imposition of hands for the same office, when important circumstances require it, is at all improper.

"If it be granted that my plan of union with the old Episcopal Church was desirable, (*which now I think was not so, though I most sincerely believed it to be so at that time,*) then, if the plan could not have been accomplished without a repetition of the imposition of hands for the same office, I did believe, and do now believe, and have no doubt, that the repetition of the imposition of hands would have been perfectly justifiable for the enlargement of the field of action, &c., and would not, by any means, have invalidated the former consecration or imposition of hands.

"Therefore I have no doubt but my consecration of Bishop Asbury was perfectly valid, and would have been so even if he had been reconsecrated.

"I never did apply to the General Convention, or any other convention, for reconsecration. I never intended that either Bishop Asbury or myself should give up our episcopal office, if the junction were to take place! but I should have had no scruple then, nor should I now, *if the junction were desirable*, to have submitted to, or to submit to, a reimposition of hands, in order to accomplish a great object: but I do say again, I do *not* now believe such a junction desirable.

"I have thus, simply and candidly, though in few words, told you my whole mind on this subject. I do not consider my solemn engagements to you invalidated by any thing that I have done, or you have done. But I charge you by the glory of God, and by every tie of love, gratitude, and candour, that you take no step which may injure my character. And now I conclude with assuring you that I greatly love and esteem you; that it is a delight to me to pray for your prosperity: and that I am, with unfeigned esteem, your very affectionate brother and faithful friend,

"T. COKE."

We hope, after this, to hear no more of Dr. Coke's "*doubt*" of the validity of his episcopal ordination, or of that of Bishop Asbury; unless our modern race of writers can persuade us that they are better acquainted with the mind of Dr. Coke than he was himself. The assertion is as unfounded as that "the introduction of episcopacy among the Methodists in the United States was expressly disapproved and forbidden by Mr. Wesley;" or that "the formation of the present plan of government among us was the undivulged project of a few, who, meeting in secret conclave, excluded the junior members even of their own body;" or that the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church have ever founded their episcopacy on the ground of "uninterrupted succession from the apostles;" or that the rejection of that doctrine

has ever been "struck out" of our Discipline. Such assertions only serve to show how superficially those who make them have examined the subject; or how servilely they copy others. We should regret that the repetition of them should oblige us to give back the "modest" imputation either of "ignorance, or want of candour."

No. II.

A COMMUNICATION FROM THE REV. N. BANGS.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Having had the pleasure of hearing you read your manuscript in the "Defence of our Fathers," &c., against the attacks of the Rev. Alexander McCaine, I take this opportunity of expressing to you my views of the orders of our ministry. This I can do the more readily, because I have already published them in my little book on "Methodist Episcopacy," and it will also give me an opportunity of correcting some mistaken opinions which have been circulated, not much to the credit of the authors of them, respecting my views on this subject. Indeed, I have been represented as holding that a third order in the church is *jure divino*, or of *divine right*, without which, of course, there can be no valid ordinances. That this is an entire misrepresentation of my views, will appear manifest to every impartial mind, from the following quotations from my book on the subject of our episcopacy.

In chapter ii, which treats of "Elders and of their duty," p. 35, is the following sentence: "I shall undertake to prove that the body of elders, in their collective capacity, had the right of consecrating ministers, and of establishing ordinances for the government of the church." It will be perceived that this sentence contains the main proposition which I set myself to prove and to sustain throughout that chapter; and among other proofs cited in support of this doctrine, is the following from Stillingfleet: "Before the jurisdiction of presbyters was restrained by *mutual consent*, the presbyters enjoyed the same liberty that the presbyters among the Jews did, of *ordaining* other presbyters, by that power they were invested in or with, at their own ordination," p. 40. And the whole reasoning in this chapter is designed to show that consecration by presbyters is Scriptural, with a view to vindicate Mr. Wesley's ordination of Dr. Coke as a superintendent, and others as elders, for the Methodist Episcopal Church. How, then, I may ask, could I have held at the same time that a third order was *essential* to constitute a gospel church? I appeal to every man that has read my book with candour, that has consulted the pieces on this subject subsequently published in the Methodist Magazine, of which I acknowledge myself the author, for the correctness of the above statement.

It is true I did believe, as I believe still, that in the primitive church, in the age immediately succeeding the apostles, there was an order—(I use the word *order* merely for convenience, to avoid circumlocution, meaning thereby nothing more than that they were invested by consent of the eldership with a power to preside over the flock of Christ, and to discharge other duties not so convenient for the presbyters to discharge)—of ministers denominated *evangelists*; that these were itinerating superintendents, (or bishops, if any like the term better,) having a general oversight of the whole church

and that these are very nearly resembled by the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church. But that these were an order of ministers by *divine appointment*, so essential that there can be no valid ordination or ordinances without them, is a sentiment I neither *now* nor *ever* believed. In proof of this, see "Methodist Episcopacy," p. 56, where are the following words. "It moreover appears highly probable, that whatever authority these itinerating evangelists possessed, they derived it by delegation from the body of presbyters; to whom belonged the *original* right of modifying the government of the church, as they saw it expedient for the benefit of the community, provided they did not transcend the bounds of their authority by transgressing a known precept of Christ."

As to the account of the Methodist Episcopal Church, published first in Martindale's Dictionary, and afterward in Buck's Theological Dictionary, which I prepared under the sanction of the Book Committee before you were associated with me in the Book Concern, I consider it a simple statement of a matter of fact, that the Methodist Episcopal Church acknowledges three *orders* of ministers, deacons, elders, and bishops, which fact certainly no one can contradict, still understanding the word *order*, when applied to bishops, as above defined. If any choose to say that we acknowledge two *orders only*, and a superior minister possessing a delegated jurisdiction, chiefly of an executive character, he has my full consent; I will not dispute about words. That Mr. Wesley did, with the aid of other presbyters, invest Dr. Coke with fuller powers, as a Methodist superintendent, than he did those whom he denominated elders, and that he intended to establish a Methodist Episcopal Church among the Methodists in America, I think you have fully proved; and I heartily wish you success in your undertaking: for I think it a sacred duty we owe to the "venerable dead" to vindicate them against such invidious, unprovoked, and unmanly attacks, as those of the author of the "History and Mystery of Methodist Episcopacy;" a title as *quaint* as the contents of the book are manifestly *unjust* and erroneous.

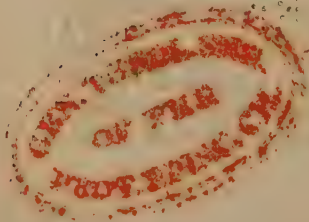
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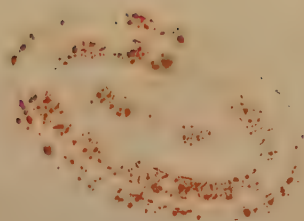
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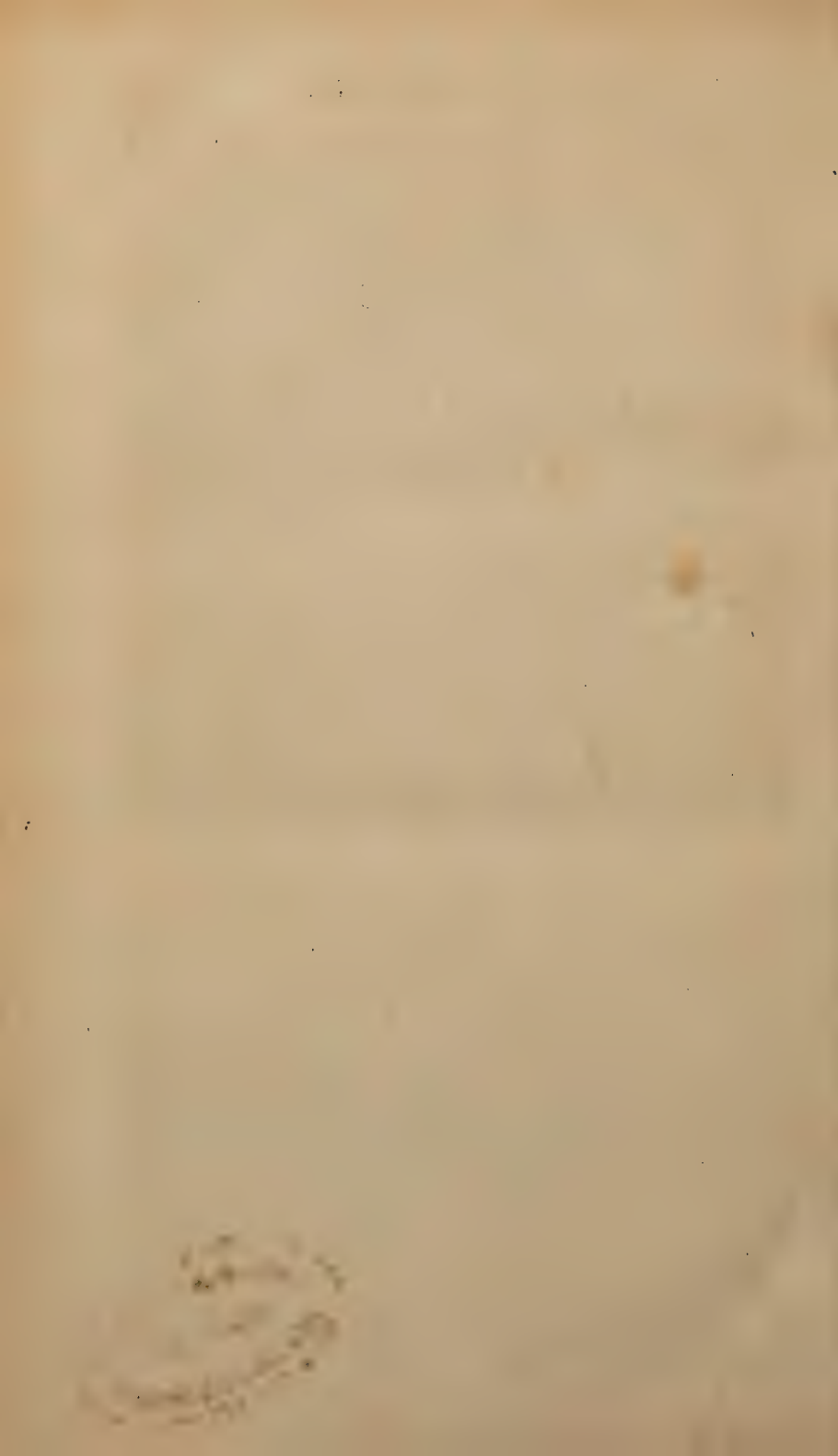
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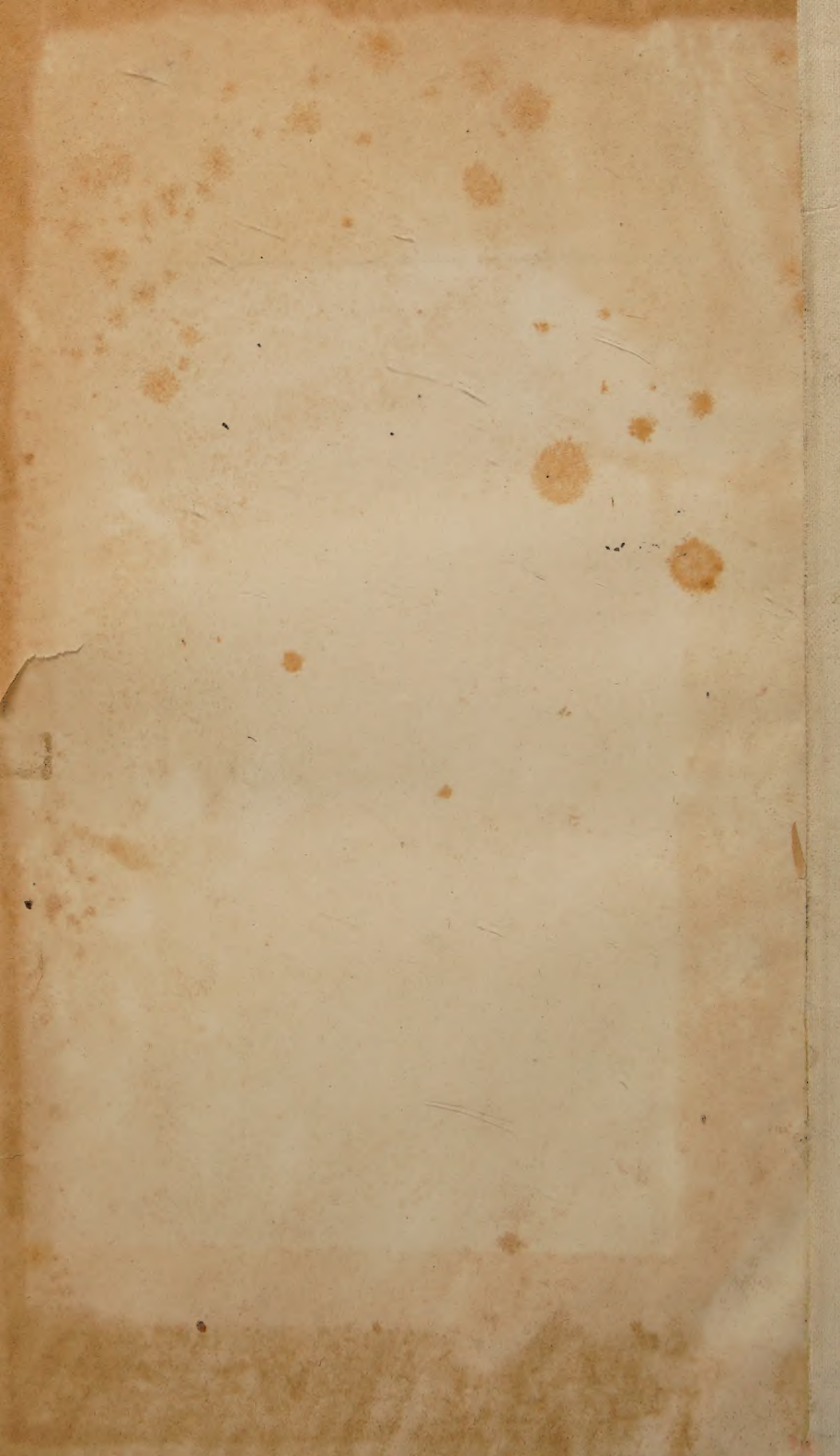
THE MINUTE TO OBEY MR. WESLEY.

WE have shown that by leaving Mr. Wesley's name off the Minutes, was simply meant the rescinding of the minute of the conference of 1784, to obey him in matters belonging to church government; and also the peculiar circumstances in which that act took place. With regard to the conference of 1787, by whom that minute was rescinded, Mr. Snethen said, if he might be permitted to show his opinion, he should "applaud them for renouncing the obligation." Answer to J. O'Kelly, p. 18.









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Emory, John D.D.

Episcopal Controversy; Reviewed

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